

Elementary English

A Magazine of the Language Arts

NOVEMBER, 1959

READING



WRITING



SPEAKING



LISTENING



SPELLING



ENGLISH USAGE



CHILDREN'S BOOKS



RADIO AND
TELEVISION



AUDIO-VISUAL AIDS



POETRY



CREATIVE
WRITING

THE BETSY-TACY STORIES
UNDERWAY IN READING
INTERMEDIATE GRADE WRITING
LANGUAGE ARTS RESEARCH



From *Otto in Texas* (Viking).

(See Page 524).

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of Teachers of English*

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ELEMENTARY ENGLISH

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No. 7

VALERIE BEARDWOOD

Betsy-Tacy Stories - Books to Grow On

The bride was dressed in "sweeping white silk ... frothy with tulle ... and a tulle cap and veil edged with orange blossoms," while the handsome blonde-haired groom stood waiting by the fireplace with shining eyes. Betsy Ray was radiant as she started down the stairs. She was trying to remember that a bride should look shy and not so happy, but her cheeks were "flaming" and her hazel eyes shining.

"Dearly beloved ... we are gathered together here in the sight of God and in the face of this company, to join together this man and this woman in Holy Matrimony ..." And so Betsy Ray and Joe Willard were married and young hearts swelled and throbbed in pride and joy.

Betsy's Wedding (Crowell), a Betsy-Tacy story by Maud Hart Lovelace has been read with a great deal of satisfaction by her young fans. And the children who have read it owe their interest not only to the warmth and humor a single book by Mrs. Lovelace can impart, for *Betsy's Wedding* is more than one story. The Ray

family and friends are acquaintances of long standing and her avid readers have known Betsy even longer than the smiling groom, Joe Willard, has. They met her when she was a pig-tailed five year old

living in the little yellow house on Hill Street. They knew her when Betsy first met Tacy and the golden-haired Tib, in the days of bare feet and the play house in the piano box.

The first book in the series, *Betsy-Tacy* for 6-10 year olds, was written because Mrs. Lovelace's daughter, Merian, enjoyed hearing her mother tell stories about the things she used to do as a child. The book came out in 1940 and at that time the author had no

idea that she was starting off on a series that would take her and Betsy through ten books and prove a popular favorite.

Betsy-Tacy and Tib and *Betsy and Tacy Go Over the Big Hill* were written for 8-12 year olds, *Betsy and Tacy Go Downtown* for the 10-14 age group. (Illustrated by Lois Lenski). These early books are full of the simple natural world of little girls: make-believe, birthday



Maud Hart Lovelace

parties, the first day of school, dress up, and the fun of friends. Some of the favorites are the Easter egg tree, the show in the back yard and the naughty things Betsy could always think up even when the three girls were trying hard to be good.



The bride was dressed in "sweeping white silk ... frothy with tulle ..."

Largely fiction, based on fact, the stories have their settings in a town the author calls Deep Valley in Minnesota at the turn of the century.

Maud Lovelace is a person with a sincere likable manner and a happy youthful personality. There is a sparkle about her that makes it easy to see that she and fun-loving Betsy are practically one and the same. Born in Mankato, Minnesota, Maud Hart lived in a small yellow house just as Betsy did. She had two sisters and lived across the street from a large Irish family. This family had a little girl her age who had long red curls and used to hide her face with her hair when she felt especially shy. These are only a few of the similari-

ties between the lives of Maud Hart and Betsy Ray.

As a young lady Maud Hart attended the University of Minnesota and later travelled in Europe, as Betsy did, just before World War I broke out. In 1917 she married Delos Lovelace, a young newspaperman, who at that time was a lieutenant in a machine gun battalion. In 1928 the Lovelaces moved to New York where their daughter was born several years later.

Just as Betsy has, Mrs. Lovelace has almost always been busy writing something. Poetry or short stories were her earliest tries and later she became interested in historical novels for adults, and wrote five by herself and two others in which she collaborated with her husband.

Any Betsy reader knows that Betsy as a child (and Mrs. Lovelace) kept voluminous journals and put them away with snapshots and scrapbooks. Mrs. Lovelace stored her collection of mementos for many years until she began to write the teenage group of stories. When she sat down to read the old journals, she found herself alternately laughing out loud and shaking her head hopelessly. "Oh, no," she thought, "this is much too silly. I couldn't use any of this." But when her advisers, husband Delos and Merian, began to read over her shoulder they too began to chuckle and their comments were more positive.

"Oh, yes, Maudie, this is good," her husband said. "You can use this, it's just right." Looking the material over more carefully, she saw how much of it could be used to give just the right flavor of spice to her characters and authenticity to the

background of the period.

Though in an old-fashioned setting, there is an ageless charm about the Betsy-Tacy books that makes them as modern as rock and roll. Years don't make much difference in the behavior of teenagers. Girls still get excited over clothes and parties and have their secret methods with boys. And boys are still maddeningly unpredictable.

Heaven to Betsy began the stories written for teenagers, followed by *Betsy in Spite of Herself*, *Betsy was a Junior*, *Betsy and Joe* and *Betsy and the Great World*. (Illustrated by Vera Neville) From these emerge the familiar personalities and customs of a close knit family. Because of Sunday night lunch, Betsy's readers become really acquainted with Mr. Ray. This is his special institution when the kitchen is his domain. On Sunday night it is Mr. Ray who puts the coffee pot on and clears everyone out of the kitchen while he makes sandwiches of cold roast beef or onions. Because of Sunday night lunch, Mr. Ray has become so real and the idea seems like such a good one that many families have been hearing the question, "Why can't we do that at our house?"

Evenings with the Crowd singing around the piano and Betsy's sister Julia playing for everyone or singing selections from her favorite operas, helps the growing friendship between the reader and Betsy's family and friends. Before long they too begin to feel like friends of the family.

"There were always joke presents in the Rays' Christmas stockings. Every year Mrs. Ray received an onion, tastefully wrapped, with a card from one Henry

Tucker who had once been her beau. The writing always looked like Mr. Ray's ... Mr. Ray was often presented with a worn-out boot or shoe from Helmus Hanson, who ran the rival shoe store ..." And this is another Ray custom readers have taken over, according to letters Mrs. Lovelace receives.



"Tacy and Betsy," a picture taken when Mrs. Lovelace and the little Irish girl across the street were both ten.

It wasn't long after the first Betsy-Tacy book came out that Mrs. Lovelace began to hear from her readers. To her delight, Betsy was making so many friends that from ten to twelve letters were coming in every week ... a figure that has remained fairly constant throughout the years.

The letters have been a source of great satisfaction to Mrs. Lovelace and in some cases have been the beginnings of affectionate friendships. Some of these friends

have even visited the author in her home in Claremont, California, where she and her husband have lived since 1954.

Mrs. Lovelace smiles when she speaks of the friends she and Betsy have made. Her childhood was an extraordinarily happy one and she feels deeply gratified to



Betsy and Tacy going up the Big Hill—
from *Betsy-Tacy*.

have been able to share it with so many children. She is genuinely proud of her collection of letters and snapshots. Always the letters are chummy and confiding as if Maud Lovelace were actually Betsy and their own age.

From California: "I have complimented myself many times in thinking that I'm just like you . . . Your books went through our crowd like wild fire and Betsy, just to show you how much influence they had . . . we had house parties, sings around the piano, and now almost every girl has a journal."

Now that some of the Betsy-Tacy books are being published in Japan, Mrs.

Lovelace is receiving shy carefully written notes from children in that country. What better way could Japanese children learn about the customs of our teenagers and our country than in the wholesome setting of the Ray's "music room" and the antics of the Deep Valley Crowd?

From Hiroshima: "I think these are very wonderful book because I had a cheerful and exciting time reading it."

From Nagoya-shi: "When I read *Heaven to Betsy* and *Betsy and Joe* I was very deeply moved by them. And I became one of your devoted readers since.

"Your novels describe the American teenager's life vividly and give us much knowledge of them . . . They also give us a lot of dreams and hopes. In Japan we teenager scarcely have chances to dance or make date. But reading you, novels I think as though I were the heroine."

From America, Canada, or Japan, chummy or shy, the letters have a touching quality about them. And it is because of this heartfelt response that the Betsy-Tacy series has grown until at last all dreams are fulfilled and Betsy and Joe are happily married.

Late in October, 1955 the following announcement was printed:

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Ray
and Maud Hart Lovelace
announce the marriage of
Betsy Ray

to
Mr. Joseph Willard
on September Fourteenth
Minneapolis, Minnesota

And on September 14, 1955 two hundred guests, educators, librarians and others in the Children's book field attended a tea and reception at the Waldorf-

Astoria in honor of *Betsy's Wedding*. Not only was Betsy's wedding an affair of great interest to everyone acquainted with her, but it marked the completion of the tenth book in the series. The occasion was an event to remember. Greeting guests beside Mrs. Lovelace was a life-size replica of Betsy dressed in her wedding gown and looking her loveliest.

When the party was over and the excitement had died down a little, the Betsy doll was a carefully packed in a large box and began a trip that was to last three years. All over the United States Betsy has appeared at book stores, libraries and book fairs.

Last year, the Betsy doll was beginning to show signs of wear and Mrs. Lovelace donated her to the public library in Mankato, Minnesota where she is today.

Because requests for the doll were still coming in, the Crowell company had two smaller dolls made. The interest in Betsy is so great that even with two Betsys, the dolls are booked ahead six years.



Betsy and Tacy in the Easter Egg Tree—
from *Betsy-Tacy*.

Naturally Betsy's friends are pleased with *Betsy's Wedding*. What could be more romantic than Betsy coming down the stairs to meet Joe, the fun of setting up



Betsy and Tony—from *Betsy and Joe*.

housekeeping, the problems and joys of young newly weds? The book leaves them feeling happy though not entirely satisfied. For not a few readers confess to shedding tears when Joe leaves for the army:

"Betsy wept softly.

" 'Nothing in the whole world could come between you and me, Betsy. We're ... woven together. You know that. And darling when I come back we'll have our little home again. We'll have Bettina.'

" 'How do you know all these things?' Betsy asked through her tears.

" 'I know,' he said. 'I feel it in my bones.' And he held her closer and let her cry as long as she felt like crying."

Coming to the end of *Betsy's Wedding*, Betsy's fans are a little sad, not only because Joe has gone to camp and will soon be going overseas, but because it is the last Betsy-Tacy book.

While in the opinion of one enthusiastic reader quoted in *Junior Reviewers*,

"Betsy books should go on forever," Mrs. Lovelace is not quite willing to continue the books into another generation. However, she does have plans for the final book in the series which she is going to call *Betsy's Bettina*. She feels, as the children do, that it is not right to leave Joe overseas and that to end the stories happily, Betsy should have a baby.

All good things must come to an end at some time, but even if *Betsy's Bettina* does prove to be the last in the series,

there's little doubt that the Betsy-Tacy stories will continue to be books to grow on for years to come.

Other books by Mrs. Lovelace are:

The Tune is in the Tree

The Trees Kneel at Christmas

Winona's Pony Cart

The Golden Wedge— a collection of Indian legends of South America written in collaboration with Delos Lovelace.

What Cabrillo Found

MURIEL CROSBY

Getting Underway in Reading

Many conflicts in teaching children to read center in the methods to be used. Reading is a complex process. Because the situation influences which methods are most appropriate for a teacher and her children, most good teachers use many methods.

Regardless of the methods used by schools in teaching children to read, the end goals are usually well agreed upon. Most parents and teachers want for children

- The development of keen and permanent interests in reading
- The ability to comprehend and think in every reading situation
- The command of tools which will foster an increasing reading vocabulary

The methods selected for achieving these goals frequently result in conflicts. For example, a phonetic method solely concerned with the mechanics of reading is not likely to stimulate the process of thinking in the reading situation. A

method solely devoted to building a sight vocabulary is unlikely to increase the child's ability to attack unknown words and solve their mysteries for himself. Many modern elementary schools take from each of the acceptable methods of reading those features which will benefit their children.

The Beginning

A commonly accepted procedure is to begin to interest children in reading, when there is readiness for it, by writing on the chalkboard or large sheets of chart paper, a simple story of some experience the children have had.

Mrs. Tillie's first grade class went to a farm. When the children returned to school they talked over their experiences. Mrs. Tillie volunteered to write their story on the board. Here is what the children dictated as a result of Mrs. Tillie's encouragement to talk and to think sequentially of what happened.

Dr. Crosby is Assistant Superintendent of the Wilmington, Delaware, Public Schools. This is the second of a series of six articles.

Milk Comes From Cows
We went to the farm.
We went on a big bus.
We saw a cow.
The farmer milked the cow.
The farmer let us milk the cow.
The milk was warm.
Not like in bottles.

In these first weeks in school, it is obvious that the children could not read their story at first. But Mrs. Tillie could read it to them. The children began to associate those funny little symbols which grown-ups call letters and words with what they knew they had dictated. They had many opportunities in subsequent sessions to see their story and listen to its being read. They joined in with Mrs. Tillie and read it for themselves. And, finally, some of the children began to remember and could find the sentences that told about different parts of their experience.

Taking Hold

Mrs. Tillie was to have many experience stories with her children. Often she made a card for each sentence and the children arranged the story in the proper sequence. Sometimes she cut the sentences into phrases and the children matched the phrases with a master copy, showing Mrs. Tillie that they could see likenesses and differences. Many games were played with the stories and the phrase cards.

It was not surprising to Mrs. Tillie to find that after several months a large number of her youngsters had developed a "sight" vocabulary of twenty-five to fifty words. Of course, all of the children did not have equal ability and many would take a much longer time to develop a sight vocabulary. But for those who were ready, Mrs. Tillie introduced a pre-primer one

day. The children discovered in their "first" books many words they recognized at sight. As they discussed the pictures, recalled familiar experiences and recognized words they knew, the introduction to books had become for these children the opening of doors to a wider world. Theirs was a "success" story.

Becoming Independent

Mrs. Tillie continued developing the many experience stories of her children along with their use of books. It occurred to Mrs. Tillie in January that one group of youngsters was forging ahead and the children were showing signs of being frustrated because they needed words outside of their present sight vocabulary. Mrs. Tillie knew they were ready for some self-help techniques.

For some time, Mrs. Tillie had been using the illustrations in the stories to help the children comprehend. These pictures constituted an important tool for helping children help themselves. She had urged the children, also, not to give up when an unknown word was met while reading. "Read the rest of the sentence and I am sure your common sense will tell you what the word must be," she said. And usually she was right. While Mrs. Tillie didn't identify this method of attacking words, she knew she was helping the children to use context clues to help themselves.

And now, Mrs. Tillie felt that command of phonics would help the most able children even more in their attack on new words. Accordingly, she began to create opportunities to introduce this technique. "Look, Dottie, this word begins just as your name does; do you know what sound

it starts with?" A gleam came into Dottie's eye and she began a tentative attack on the word. "Down?", she questioned, hesitantly. "That is it!" complimented Mrs. Tillie. "When you know the beginning sound of a word and when you read ahead, almost always you will be able to read the new word for yourself. Let's look back over this page and find all the words that begin the way Dottie's name begins."

With this particular group of children, phonics soon became a tool which, together with a number of others, freed the children from the frustration of not being able to read the new words they met.

Mrs. Tillie found that other groups became ready for phonics at later times during the year. But for a small group of immature children, phonics was not introduced until the mid-point of the second grade.

The most able readers were ready before the close of the school year to attack new words through an analysis of their structure. They could find known small words in larger unknown words and by calling on the other tools of self-help which they knew, they were often able to conquer the new words. Thus, "bell-ringer", when broken down into its component parts, became familiar and known.

Mrs. Tillie had not been concerned alone with helping the children increase their reading vocabulary. To Mrs. Tillie, there was no particular glory in developing a broad reading vocabulary unless the child comprehended and used what he read. Much time, therefore, was spent in interpreting what was read, in interpreting word meanings and in extending word meanings.

Developing Skills

Developing good study skills seemed just as important to Mrs. Tillie as developing a good vocabulary and good comprehension. Mrs. Tillie did not believe that children must wait for the middle grades before learning good study skills. She felt they started in the primary school and that the middle grades built upon good beginnings. Accordingly, Mrs. Tillie spent a lot of time in having the children organize their experiences or stories in sequence, in classifying pictures at first and, later, objects and words, in summarizing experiences and stories, in using the table of contents, and in finding related stories in many books.

Following directions, finding specific answers in a story to questions raised, re-reading to verify an answer, these and many other work skills were introduced and developed by Mrs. Tillie during the children's first grade reading experience.

Becoming Ready for Next Steps

Mrs. Tillie believed that regardless of the age and grade of the child, the child himself must be helped to become ready for each successive step in building reading skills. She knew that this readiness would occur at different times for different children. She knew that some of her children would be well on the way to a command of reading by the end of their first year of learning and that others would not be as ready or able until their second or third year.

Enjoying Reading

Just as important as skills, however, Mrs. Tillie felt that the child's appreciation of reading and of books must be fostered.

This was an aspect of the reading program which she felt could be just as meaningful to the less able children on their level of maturity as to the most able on their level. In stories read by the teacher or children, as they became able, much pleasure was derived from opportunities provided for the children to identify themselves with the stories read. They often told of personal experiences similar to those read about. In simple language, they identified the emotions of the characters. Describing how the characters felt helped interpret their own feelings. Identifying descriptive words, action words, humorous words, interested the children. Grammatical terms and rules were never used, but the children were experiencing what these terms and rules would later convey to them.

And, finally, Mrs. Tillie kept close watch upon the frequency with which a child voluntarily turned to reading for his pleasure. She encouraged parents to become familiar with appropriate books for their children and fostered the use of the school and public libraries in every way possible.

Teaching Children to Read Demands Know-how and Understanding

When Mrs. Tillie was asked what method of reading she used, she was taken aback. "Goodness," she exclaimed. "I guess I use them all, depending on which child needs what help at the time." She explained, "You know, to me teaching a child to read is a little like sewing. When I get ready to sew, I get out my assortment of threads, needles and scissors. Each has a different purpose. If I'm going to mend

my husband's jeans, I use very stout thread, a heavy needle with a large eye, and my long, heavy scissors. But if I'm working on the christening dress for my son's new baby, I use the finest of threads, a needle so tiny I must take particular pains not to lose it, and my daintiest embroidery scissors. And, so, it seems each sewing job demands different tools. I do the same thing in my teaching. I try to find the tool that is right for the job to be done."

Mrs. Tillie is a member of a large faculty. Most of the teachers have Mrs. Tillie's point of view although their ways of teaching are distinctly their own. All accept the fact that the more successful the teaching of reading, the wider will grow the scope of differences in ability as the children progress through the school. Olson's¹ research reports that any typical group of fifth graders with a span of normal intelligence (90-110 I.Q.) will range from second to ninth grade reading ability. Mrs. Tillie's colleagues support this research finding. They feel that the more skillful they become in effectively teaching each child to read, the wider will grow the scope of reading abilities among the children in the school.

Each of the major aspects of the reading program begun by Mrs. Tillie: meaning, word recognition, skills, work study skills, and appreciation are taught on successively more mature levels from the first grade through the twelfth grade. Only in this way does the school system feel that it is meeting its responsibilities to children and to the community.

¹Olson, Willard C., "Seeking, Self-Selection, and Pacing in the Use of Books by Children," *The Packet* (Boston: D. C. Heath and Co., Spring 1952), p. 10.

Getting Underway in Reading

"Getting Underway in Reading" is concerned with the question of methods in teaching reading. Its purpose is to demonstrate that there is no single successful method in teaching all children to read, but that the good teacher draws upon many methods depending upon the needs of children and the situation.

Suggested Uses of This Article

1. Orient the staff for individual study of this article by explaining its purpose. Make sure that it is understood that while a first grade group is used for illustrative purposes, the basic principles and methods suggested apply to any age group.
2. Make this article the basis for faculty discussion of successful methods used by the staff in helping children learn to read. Suggested discussion questions follow:
 - How are we helping children become ready for reading on successive maturity levels?
 - What experiences are being provided among each age group to stimulate growth in reading? Share experience reading charts from various grades for illustrative purposes.
 - Under what conditions is sight vocabulary being emphasized in the primary level? In the intermediate level?
 - What do we look for in determining whether or not children are ready for self-help techniques in building vocabulary?

—What are we doing to make sure that reading is a "success" experience for our children?

3. Ask your librarian and art teacher to plan a typical classroom bulletin board designed to stimulate interest in books for one or more of the following groups:

Kindergarten

Older children with reading difficulties

Typical nine year olds

Most advanced readers in the sixth grade

Encourage groups of teachers concerned to discuss the possibilities in this technique for stimulating interest and to try out their own ideas in their rooms.

4. Hold grade or level conference on or stimulate teacher leaders to take responsibility for exploring the subject of drill and practice in teaching children to read. Always emphasize the role of experience and meaning in reading and try to evaluate practice and drill techniques in terms of reading for meaning.
5. Ask teachers in specialized areas to study the experiences they might provide to foster reading through:
 - Readiness on all age levels
 - Developing meanings
 - Enriching experiences
 - Encouraging reading tastes and habits
6. Begin to build a reference source of outstanding experience charts on all levels for use with staff and parents.
7. During a PTA meeting have successful teachers discuss and illustrate their methods of teaching reading.

Children Learn as They Read

"Children learn as they read." In the beginning this statement seemed so obvious that I wondered what I could say that would be worth the time and effort; but, as I pondered, many possible ramifications came to mind because of the multiple learnings that grow out of reading—multiple learnings that may be only partially realized unless the teacher is aware of all the possibilities of learning through reading.

It is important, in the first place, that teachers see reading as a form of communication. It is one of the language arts. The writer of the written or printed word is expressing ideas to his readers who have the responsibility and opportunity of receiving his ideas accurately and fully. The child's very first experience in reading should be a meaningful one, not an activity that involves mere word-calling. The first words that little Stanley learned to read were *Open* and *Closed*. When he entered school, all he wanted to do was to go down the little slide off in the corner of the big room. He didn't want to listen to the teacher's stories, to be a part of the sharing period, to paint at the easels. All he wanted to do was slide, slide, slide,—never taking turns if he could help it. So the teacher, in desperation, put up the signs *Open* and *Closed*; and explained to him that he could slide only when the *Open* sign was up. Stanley was a good sport; he knew what the words meant and he slid only when the slide was open. He was truly reading.

In the child's earliest years, all lan-

guage is oral: he hears what is said to him; he talks in reply. His beginning reading experiences are designed to give meaning to the printed symbols he sees, and most teachers use his familiar speech as a bridge into reading as he prints on board and chart what he has said. So print becomes "talk written down." As the same words appear again and again in a meaningful way, the child builds up a sight vocabulary. Thus he learns a stock of thoroughly familiar words as he reads.

But there are multiple learnings—remember? As a stock of sight words is built up, the child inevitably begins to note the similarities and differences in these words and gradually acquires the ability to "figure out" new words that resemble his old friends but that look and sound a little different and mean something else entirely. That is, as children read, they tend to pick up many essential skills in recognizing new words. However, a majority of children meet snags in word analysis from time to time and they learn that they need some specific guidance if they are to read fluently and get the message of the printed page with ease and competence. What these children learn is the desire for some supplementary lessons that will teach directly the requisite skills that they cannot pick up by themselves in the process of reading independently.

To repeat the title again: "Children learn as they read." For it is through reading widely and abundantly that they be-

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come truly proficient. Throughout the school day and at home should arise many opportunities for reading all types of materials: informational, recreational, teacher-made, commercially prepared, reading series, whole books. We might say that a child learns to read "swimmingly" as he reads abundantly. Here, too, there are side learnings. There is pleasure in being proficient and the child learns to enjoy reading and tends to adopt it as a permanent source of information and pleasure. Through the varied contacts that his reading affords, he acquires a wide range of interests to be met by further reading. Events and people in far-off lands and in long-ago times become meaningful and familiar. Thus, in the process of much reading, children learn skills, confidence and pleasure, facts, new concepts, vocabulary, and understandings.

All this sounds pretty optimistic, doesn't it? We all know that there are many children who do not read well, who consequently do not like to read. My thesis is that most of them could have become proficient readers who get enjoyment out of delving into books. If all proper guidance had been given as soon as these children were beginning to bog down, they would undoubtedly have become adequately skilled and happy readers.

In the course of reading widely, the child runs onto materials that vary in quality and authenticity. So he must become evaluative and objectively critical as he follows the presentation of the author, especially when the printed sources reflect differing viewpoints or contrary conclusions. The able reader learns to be a thinker. Not only does he learn to follow

the author's train of thought; but he tries to decide if the latter's conclusions are justified, if the data are sufficient and dependable enough to warrant such conclusions, if the author is biased or intentionally marshaling facts in such a way as to predispose his readers to a certain course of action.

We all know what happens when a shopper finds an expensive, beautifully tailored dress that is a perfect fit—one that she cannot afford. No other cheaper dress will suit after that; all look shoddy. She has a standard by which to judge everything else she finds. A similar result can and should come as the child samples all kinds of books. He comes, if he is sensitive to style and quality in printed materials, to select the well written, artistic book. Trashy and sensational plots that are based on wrong values will not satisfy. We hope that we can and do help children to learn high standards of selection as they read; and it is possible to accomplish much if we see that really good and attractive books surround the child. The child will learn good taste as he reads if we screen properly and provide a varied reading diet with many levels of difficulty and a wide range of topics and treatment.

It is indeed important that children learn to think as they read—to follow the author's line of reasoning, to select the major points, to note the sequence of developmental events, to evaluate the authenticity of materials and detect gaps that vitiate the conclusions which an author reaches, to abstract information and principles which the reader can use to go ahead with ideas he is developing. Equally important is the effect that a child's reading

can have on him as a person. The boy can read of the feats of legendary and historical heroes and begin to formulate personal and social goals. Just as gazing on the Great Stone Face caused Ernest to develop a nobility all his own, just so can reading inspiring books help a boy or girl to develop ideals and standards of personal conduct that will contribute to a fine personality. Girls can savor the loftiness of purpose and conduct reflected in the more sentimental stories they read and similarly be influenced toward worthy ideals and standards. The boys and girl can read of the problems and ways of living of people of other races, religions, economic standards, and political standards and attain an understanding that makes of them intelli-

gent, broad-minded citizens of the world.

The children of today live in a world of rapid change, swift developments, almost instant communication. By listening to radio and viewing television and by querying the well-informed traveler in the community, boys and girls can learn much without a great amount of reading; but if they want to authenticate, to evaluate, to plan a course of action, they must read to supplement these extra-reading sources of information. It is as children develop into adults who learn to understand their world through well selected reading that we look hopefully to the future. The citizens of the world need to understand one another, and reading can do much to further understanding.

Winter Snows Are Falling
 Little white stars
 Falling to the ground
 Look like little crystals
 But never make a sound.

The wind is cold
 The sky is white
 The ground is soft as cotton,
 And a snowman cross the street
 Smiles fat and round.

Pamela Maras—Age 8.

Sent in by Sister Mary Kieran,
 Corpus Christi School, New York

Robert Louis Stevenson's lovely poem, "Autumn Fires," was published in *Elementary English* last month and erroneously attributed to an elementary school child. This is the kind of error about which every busy editor, still shuffling papers in his sleep, has nightmares. Our sincere apologies to all lovers of *A Child's Garden of Verses*, who must certainly include all readers of this magazine.

"Grading" Children's Books

Having worked for eighteen years in a Children's Department of a large public library, I have seen good readers, poor readers, and mediocre readers come and go. I have heard the "Johnny-can-Johnny-can't" battle over and over and, through it all, books have gone in and out over the children's circulation desk by the score. Yet a trend of the last few years is creeping in stealthily but surely—the demand that a specific grade level be applied to each book. I simply cannot tell a persistent parent whether her Johnny should read *Treasure Island* at 6th grade 10th month or 8th grade 2nd month. It is impossible to tell a little second grade moppet whether or not *this* book is on her grade level. What has happened? What unseen force has conditioned parents, children and teachers to the need of grading every book before a child can read it?

A baby is born, presumably not speaking or reading English or any other tongue. Before he begins attending school he has been exposed to all sorts of people and their varied speech in person and through the all-pervading television. If he is lucky, he has had read to him quantities of picture books—we hope of the quality of *Johnny Crow's Garden*, *Little House*, and *Madeline*. None of this has been said or written for a child of limited vocabulary. Of course he has not known the full meaning of every word at the time it was spoken or read, but it is surprising to note the variety of his vocabulary and the facility with which he uses it.

Then what happens? All of a sudden

he starts to school. He is thrilled. Now he can read to himself, or so he thinks. What really happens is that he goes through a long "reading readiness" period. At long last he reads—and what does he read? "I see the ball. The ball is red." Now don't misunderstand me. I do not know the mechanics of teaching a child to read. Certainly he must be drilled, but is it absolutely necessary in grade after grade of elementary school to struggle so hard to pigeonhole every book in a certain grade level? Is it so horrible for a child not to know every word on a page? Do *you* know every word and its full implication on each page you read—even yet? I certainly do not. What is the matter with his use of the dictionary occasionally? Or, for that matter, if he gets the meaning of the sentence, what real difference does it make?

Now let me hasten to add that there must be some distinction made between reading for information and reading for pleasure, interrelated as they undoubtedly are. It can be essential that the child know and understand fully the meaning of an arithmetic problem or a geographical location. I am really pleading my case for freedom from this grade level strait jacket being put on recreational reading. Let it be the testing ground. The more fun they get from reading, the more they will read—and the more they read the more understanding they will bring to all kinds of reading.

I defy anyone to put *Tom Sawyer*,

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Alice in Wonderland, *Peter Pan*, *The Mof-fats*, and host of others into a grade level. I can say that this book usually interests a boy or girl at an approximate age, but further than that I cannot go. The really fine books have been written because the author had something to say. He did not and does not want to be hidebound by having to limit his vocabulary to a certain number of words. Oh yes, Dr. Seuss has succeeded admirably with *A Cat in the Hat*, but we must remember he is a near genius in his field and even then his *A Cat in the Hat* isn't another *And To Think that I Saw It on Mulberry Street*.

The results of all this in the quality of books being published are deplorable. The publishers are flooding the market with books written to order, watered down, doctored, squeezed, pounded and arranged to meet a prescribed grade level. Perhaps we really do need some of these titles, but let's encourage the child to use them to polish up his reading technique in class drill and to gain added facility. These books are comparable to the scales in music; practice does make perfect. But please let us encourage the child to read *Black Beauty* and *Homer Price* at the same time. These books *can* be enjoyed even if he doesn't know every word. Equally certain is the fact that they cannot be graded.

What will happen to all these books, part of a child's literary heritage, if he waits to read them when he is on *their* grade level? Since they can't be graded, he will be in high school or even college or

working before he tackles them. Lost to these unfortunate souls forever will be many, many books that would have provided companionship, fun, and mental and spiritual development. Even if he later forces himself to read some of these books because he thinks he should, he will have lost the clarity of vision and the sense of wonder with which he would have read them as a child.

The next time I am asked to "grade" *Mary Poppins*, *Heidi*, *Grimm's Fairy Tales* or *Winnie the Pooh*, I will probably vanish in a puff of smoke. *This* new development I cannot weather.

Rufus M. and the Librarian

"It's parrots, pirates, ships, young page and peer;

It's skates, dolls, silver cup, and secret cave;
It's Arab, Tartar—riders swift and brave;
"Yes! Yes! a Newbery prize book, my dear."

"It's rooster, frog, and dog—no beast to fear;

It's ducks, trim little birds, and a big bear;
It's house, snow, strong faces, and child at prayer."

"Yes! Yes! a Caldecott prize book, my dear."

"It's thieving hound dog with chewed ear;
It's yeller two ways, but not yeller at all;
It's droopy-horned bull, wild hogs, and bear's maul."

"Yes! Yes! a Sequoyah prize book, my dear."

Mrs. Floy Perkinson Gates

(Oklahoma children declared Fred Gipson's *Old Yeller* their favorite for the 1958-1959 school year, and Mr. Gipson became the winner of the first *Sequoyah* prize bestowed upon an author.)

A Re-Examination of the Role of Experience Charts

Experience charts have enjoyed some popularity for several decades. Their source might truly be traced to Comenius, Pestalozzi, Dewey, and Parker, and others who pursued the doctrine of teaching beginning reading based upon the experience of the child. Since many teachers make some use of experience charts and since some of the uses (and abuses?) of experience charts may have recently brought about an aura of disfavor, their role may need re-examination.

There are a number of crucial questions relative to experience charts which need to be looked at critically. Through resolution of such questions, experience charts may be put to their most useful purposes as opposed to their becoming a formal procedure which claims too much unto itself. A few such questions are suggested:

1. What are the objectives for the use of experience charts?
2. What content is worthy of an experience chart?
3. What is the role of vocabulary in experience chart reading?
4. What are some good uses of an experience chart?
5. What are the chief values in the use of experience charts; and what are the major dangers and weaknesses to be aware of in the use of experience charts?

By way of introduction it might be said that an experience chart is simply a record—an individual or group-dictated composition. As the pupils express sen-

tences related to some topic, the teacher utilizing the child's own language, writes them on the chalkboard. (Charts made by teacher only rather than teacher-pupil have not been considered experience charts.) Under teacher guidance, sentences are usually revised for simplicity of expression and clarity of language and so arranged that a coherent story is told. Where a pupil's original statement is changed, he is made aware of this. Attention, where feasible, is called to the purpose of the punctuation marks. The title is often chosen for the story. The pupils may read the story from the chalkboard, or wait until the material has been transferred to a chart or duplicated. Colored chalk or ink may be used to indicate crucial words. The story may be illustrated by a child or a group of children (2:405). Variations are to be expected in the procedure stated above, depending upon purpose. At times a teacher may simply take notes of pupil suggestions and transfer them later to a chart. At other times she may ask the pupils to watch carefully as she writes the chart. Here she will use purposeful techniques to hold pupil attention, such as, "Watch to see if this word is like another I have written," or "What do I do at the end of this line?" and the like. Insofar as style is concerned, most teachers appear to prefer the "paragraph form" since it is

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more realistic than having each sentence represent a separate paragraph.

While it appears that experience charts are most used in the primary grades and particularly in the period prior to the first reading book in the first grade, it is used to some extent by elementary teachers throughout the grades. Indeed, some writers recommend that experience method and materials be employed to a greater degree at higher stages of development in the elementary school rather than almost exclusively at the beginning reading level is often the case (2:8). Where use of charts is employed at the intermediate levels, they are often used to indicate work standards; current events; vocabulary lists; rules for trips or games; classroom notices; record of group plans and group experiences; and group summary of information (9:137). Since the more serious questions related to experience charts are in the pre-reading stage, this paper will be limited to that aspect.

What are the objectives in use of experience charts? Should beginning reading be introduced through experience reading or with basal reading materials? General consensus of professional writers would indicate some of the major purposes of experience charts at pre-reading period as follows:

1. To provide language development prior to reading; to think oral language and written language (11:110)
2. To provide experience for a child to see that written material expresses real happenings and real ideas (3:206), to give pupils a feeling for reading, not a mastery of the technique of the reading process itself (1:166)

3. To serve as an aid in fostering attitude of thought-getting from print (10:198)
4. To provide experience for a child to acquire a feeling for sentence sequence (2:416)
5. To provide experience for a child to gain the habit of viewing words in a left to right progression (8:222)
6. To provide additional opportunity for perceptual development and visual discrimination (11:110)

These purposes would indicate that the main uses of experience records at pre-reading period are to develop readiness for systematic reading instruction and to prepare pupils for the first book of the basal series of readers (2:414). They imply that chart reading is not employed basically for teaching of initial sight vocabulary (11:109). To the contrary, exclusive use of experience charts for the purpose of building initial sight vocabulary is highly questionable in the minds of several writers (8:224; 5:175). Another way of saying the same thing is that experience charts would appear to provide good pre-book reading experience and provides one of the best ways of making the gradual transition from pre-reading to actual reading (9:136). In brief, experience reading should supplement—not supplant—the basic reading program.

What content is worthy of an experience chart? Experience reading should mean just what the name signifies. It is the reading made up about the experiences the children are having or have had. It often is built around one of the following types of experiences at the pre-reading level:

1. Trips
2. Accounts of activities in the classroom
3. Talks given by the children

4. Diaries of things going on in the classroom
5. Programs to be given
6. Description of pictures
7. Letters the children dictate to other people
8. Summary of discussion
9. Record of science experiments
10. Problems or questions under study
11. Records of plans
12. Progress records
13. News reports
14. Record of literary efforts of individuals and groups
15. Directions (as recipe, game, etc.)
16. General notices
17. Helper's charts
18. Rules or standards (fire drill; work period, etc.) (2:394; 4:218-219)

For more effective results, the teacher should do definite planning ahead of time, deciding the purpose for writing an experience chart. She must decide how to motivate the experience chart writing not from just wanting to do it, but to see reason for doing it. She should have some idea in advance of what the chart should include. Many authorities feel that emphasis should be upon the content rather than word repetition (the richness and variety of experiences is the determining factor in the real value of the chart, of course); upon expression as it is spoken rather than upon short sentences; and upon showing a need for a record. Experience might frequently be analyzed by the pupils to determine which are important to record and why it is important to record them. More specifically, each chart should be built around one central idea. For beginners, five or six lines might be considered as optimum length. Discussion is important, particularly if it is directed toward giving unity to the composition. The composition should make clear the sequence of events. Above all, the lan-

guage should be child-like (2:407-499). Lamoreau and Lee (7:126-128) suggest specific technical make-up of a chart. Needless to add, the materials needed for work—ruled chart paper, pocket charts, chart rack, felt pens, color pens, and the like—need to be easily available for teacher use.

What is the role of the vocabulary in experience charts? The more recent consensus as expressed in professional literature would appear to be that no unusual attempt be made to control the vocabulary or to provide for repetition of crucial words in experience charts at the expense of the content and the child language (12). It is not deemed necessary to try to juggle the stories so that the words which the children will find later in their preprimers will necessarily have been introduced (1:166). Of course, there is no objection to pointing out and giving attention to the words which would most likely be in any pre-primer—words of numbers, colors, sizes, shapes, names, and action—if they appear on the experience chart. Needless to add, any practice on words in the experience chart should be upon words that are most frequent and crucial in a beginning reading program. It is needless to say also that if children are expected to learn some words from the chart, it will be necessary to have numerous follow-up activities. Variations in those activities might include matching sentence and word strips; underlining certain words; finding sentences that answer particular questions; worksheets.

What are some good uses of the experience chart? Since it is known that in any true experience reading there will be

far more words involved and the amount of repetition will be far less than in any recent set of first grade reading materials, some of the suggestions for use of charts should revolve about how to operate within this framework. A few such examples along with other general procedures considered of value might be as follows:

1. Only the vocabulary which is basic to the beginning basic materials is developed instructionally; and these crucial words are used in many other situations.
2. Several uses of crucial words are developed in different types of context.
3. The types of exercise with the chart are varied—word study; questioning for understanding; and the like.
4. Visual discrimination between word form is developed as a basis for word-recognition skills.
5. Left to right is constantly demonstrated.
6. Reading of the story is always done in sequence.
7. Charts are saved and re-used frequently, particularly charts of informational nature. Reference is made to the charts as the need arises.
8. Books or summary charts may be made from individual charts (for example, weekly summary of the news may be from the daily reports). (2:419)

Having fewer charts of simple nature and spending much time with them is recommended as contrasted with having many charts of long, difficult nature and running through them rapidly.

What are the chief values and the main weaknesses to be aware of in use of experience charts? In addition to the objectives mentioned earlier, some of the values claimed for experience charts are:

1. Pupil interest is enlisted as a means of arousing a child's desire to learn to read.

2. Readiness for reading may be appraised informally.
3. Pupils have the opportunity to participate as a class group regardless of ability level.
4. It may serve as a medium for experience with an extensive vocabulary needed by pupils who readily learn words.
5. It may serve individual differences depending upon the teacher approach in writing and reading the charts.

Some of the major weaknesses that need to be taken into consideration in the use of experience charts frequently proposed are:

1. Vocabulary may not be serviceable—and lack of repetition of words that are introduced.
2. Too many experiences with the same records may result in feeling on child's part that reading is "memorization"—and boredom.
3. Material may be poorly developed, unorganized, and nonsequential.
4. Content may be restricted—dull and insipid.
5. The teacher may unduly consume time and energy in developing charts (8:222-224)

In conclusion, it might be added that it is important for teachers not to have an "either—or" attitude toward experience reading or book reading. It would appear reasonable that experience charts have an important place in modern practice for their own distinct and important purposes and values, although realizing that they can be misused. Betts, (2) for one, considers strict adherence to basic series to be less effective than a combination of experience units with book reading. The time is ripe for a carefully designed experimental study to show parallel use of chart reading and systematic book method with adequate adaptation to individual needs.

(Continued on page 532)

New Methods in Creative Dramatics

The January 1959 issue of *Elementary English* contained an article about creative dramatics in English schools which ended with a recommendation that we adopt creative dramatics as part of our curriculum.

In relation to this I wish to tell readers of the unique and outstanding work being done in this field at the Children's Center for Creative Arts at Adelphi College in Garden City, N. Y.

The inspiration and director of this program is a brilliant, unassuming woman named Grace Stanistreet who works not only with children, but also with adults who wish to advance creative teaching. People come from many parts of the country to observe the work being done at the center, for watching and listening to her philosophy is a rich and rewarding experience.

The first aspect of her philosophy is the *development of understanding*: understanding of character, emotion, and the cause and effect relationship of actions.

For example, a device frequently used by Miss Stanistreet to stimulate imagination and creative thinking is asking children what a character is thinking. "What is Cinderella thinking when she turns back to the kitchen after her sisters go to the ball?"

Once thinking is settled, then action follows. Understanding establishes this harmony between thinking and action. Understanding causes the involvement which is the essence of creative expression.

Miss Stanistreet's questions and dis-

cussion topics probe, seek, and stimulate thinking. Understanding is developed not only of the feelings of make-believe characters, but, through extension, of our own motivations and feelings. Empathy too is extended through this increased insight into universal emotions. Children have a natural capacity for identification with others which comes largely out of their capacity to imagine. Teachers would do well to utilize this ability.

Another cornerstone of her philosophy is *avoidance of the obvious and the imitative*. Part of the teacher's job is to help children eliminate cliché, and achieve something more. Both children and adults through habits of thinking developed by factors such as fear of being thought ridiculous or desire to conform, tend to take the easy way out and respond in terms of clichés.

Through skillful questioning, creation of a climate in which originality is welcome, and a sincere belief in the possibility of unique thought processes in every individual, Miss Stanistreet strives to free each individual from the shackles of this one-dimensional, unconsidered response and open the channels of creativity.

To demonstrate this, Miss Stanistreet played several games with a group of adults who were learning to use her methods.

For the first game the students were instructed to say, "My grandmother went to California and in her trunk she put a

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———" They were told to avoid the obvious things she would put into her trunk and to look for original ideas while retaining the exact form of the above words. This is a cumulative game which Miss Stanistreet uses with children in an attempt to cope with the tendency to imitate in order to conform.

The first adult said "an apple" and the second, "a banana." Miss Stanistreet asked the second to think of something in a different category and the student said, "bread." Asked to think of something totally different the student at last offered "butterflies." The next said "camel," and after a few more contributions to establish the idea of the original contribution, this game was stopped. Teachers need not persist in an experience once the desired idea has been communicated.

The next stage of the game had different restrictions, for there must be restrictions as a framework within which to operate. Now Grandmother was to take something that served a purpose, something that moved. For example, a washing machine or egg beater. This time, instead of naming it, the students were to *be* it. They were to find ways of using their bodies so expressively that the item they were, was communicated to the audience. This phase of the game with body motions was to be cumulative, as was the first phase.

This represents a step forward for children, for they learn how to come up out of their seats and get the attention of the group. Embarrassment and inhibition are overcome. The cumulative repetition of the movements is of value because this enables the person in front of the group to

get maximum attention and also to clarify and re-define preceding movements for the group. As the game progresses the responses become more original and it becomes easier for the individual to get outside of himself.

A third aspect of this philosophy is the *importance of the experience itself*. Creative dramatics should be a tool, not a subject. Miss Stanistreet feels that there is too much emphasis on play production, on the end-product, rather than on the creative process along the way. And the creative process is concerned with ideas, not with a memorized end product. She will play a game, read a poem, do an exercise such as those described above for a specific purpose, stopping when the purpose is accomplished.

The most important ingredient for the creative process is the *climate of the classroom*. The proper classroom climate for the development of all creative expression is one in which, Miss Stanistreet says, "We insure the success of the children and also give them the freedom to fail."

Often the child's immediate, spontaneous response is the important and creative one, but children hold back because of fear of failure. But when we are working toward group response we need the child who will respond immediately, for the first person who volunteers to experiment is doing the entire group a service. The optimum classroom climate will give children the freedom to try out ideas and make mistakes. We must give children this security if we wish them to produce.

Miss Stanistreet's philosophy also emphasizes the fact that *the key to effective functioning is involvement*. This relates to

the importance of purpose and motivation. The key to involvement is thinking.

For this, the teacher must make the problem clear. She must carefully select the appropriate problem, encourage the positive response, and discourage the empty, cliché response. The goal is harmonious functioning of the child as a whole. Speech and action should come together and be inseparable.

With children we must be sure that there is appropriate thinking behind the action. When harmony of thought and action are obtained, the teacher has achieved truth and release. Feeling is the essential accompaniment of thinking, and, if the child concentrates on the thinking, the feeling will come.

An interesting demonstration of this total involvement took place in a class for adult teachers. The assignment given to them the preceding week had been to get into the shoes of a character from literature and to improvise a soliloquy which this character might have said at a particular time.

The first participant had chosen the role of Alice in Wonderland at the time when Alice loses the rabbit. She stood in front of the group, motionless, and said the words Alice might have said or thought. Her voice was expressive, her choice of words good, but the ideas behind the words were not communicated and the soliloquy did not convince the audience.

When she was reminded that movement should accompany her words she got down on the floor, said a few words, scurried about, and said some more words. Still the involvement wasn't complete.

Eventually, through skillful direction, Miss Stanistreet led her to the bodily movements which were a simultaneous and necessary accompaniment of the mental process. We might, perhaps, compare it to the performance of a concert pianist whose every thought and motion must be synchronized and involved in what he is doing if he is to do well.

When the woman portraying Alice finally achieved this, a feeling of rightness swept through her audience. When there was harmony of thought and action, truth and release were achieved.

One of the major advantages to the teacher who uses this tool of creative dramatics is that *it will aid in the development of pupil-teacher rapport.*

The teacher's purpose is not to be a director or producer of a play, but to reach children. In this respect, Miss Stanistreet feels that teacher participation in presentations such as assembly programs are valid. Often a teacher will sing, dance, and act with the children during the preparation of a program; then, for the final presentation, when she is most needed, remove herself to the back of the auditorium, thus taking away an important prop from the group.

This need not happen if the teacher functions as a member of the group rather than as the director of a performance.

This article can serve only as a brief introduction to Miss Stanistreet's extraordinary achievements, but it will serve its purpose if it helps to give the reader some insight into the philosophy needed for development of the creative process. I would like to close with some of Miss Stanistreet's own words, which appeared in an article

by her entitled, "Imagination is the Beginning."

We are concerned with developing the ability to project and reveal self be-

cause it is a means to mental health and a means to growth ... To be able to recognize and encourage what is truly creative is the skill of the fine teacher.

RICHARD P. SAWYER

Helping the Slow Learner in the Elementary School

When we talk to a group of language arts teachers about aiding the slow learner, we talk in an area of frustration to teachers and of darkness for the children. It is easy and satisfactory for us to measure our progress as teachers by what the child can read and what the child can write. These two skills, in the top echelon of communication skills, are unfortunately most difficult for a child to whom symbols and generalizations mean little.

Words are symbols which vary in their level of abstraction. For a child who has extreme difficulty working with anything not concrete, all symbols are obstacles. This barrier may have the effect of a two-edged sword, for it can fill the child with feelings of inferiority and isolation.

I remember well the phrase that was quite popular with adults in my early childhood—"Did the cat get your tongue?" This feeling of inferiority, this lack of confidence (for slow learners are no less sensitive than normal children), can easily be the large cat that gets the tongue.

A while back I was watching with interest the efforts of a teacher building readiness with a group of five small boys ranging in intelligence from 75 to 84. A story for the entire class had had the illus-

tration of a giant striding across mountains and valleys and rivers. The teacher asked the small boys, "Who can take a giant step?" No one volunteered. "Who can take a long step—or a big step?" There were three who felt they could—and did so successfully. "Now, who can take a short step?" The first three all took their long steps once more. "No," said the teacher—"This is a short step." And she took a tiny little step.

"Oh," said the smallest of the five—one who had not yet volunteered, "You mean a little step."

It was quite evident that there were present here several of the limitations under which a slow learner labors. Despite the picture and despite the story, there was a great deal of difficulty in seeing the relationship between the word "giant"—which is figuratively used—and the word "large" or "big." It was also evident that although you and I may think in terms of several synonyms or antonyms, for the slow learner there is often only one. "Little" was a suitable opposite for the word "long." "Short" was not in the vocabulary of any one of this group of five.

As I visited another first grade room,

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a story was in progress. Twenty-seven children were intent upon the story, a twenty-eighth let her eyes wander out the window, wiggled, stretched out, lay down, wiggled some more, sat up, and looked out of the window again. Then as the teacher turned the book to show the children the illustration that went along with the story, the little child's interest focused along with the rest of the class for the very first time. The picture for her was concrete and meaningful. The words of the story without a picture had quite evidently meant little or nothing.

I think of other illustrations as well. Eleanor, the little kindergarten girl, day after day wailed and cried at nap time. Her teacher's gentle, modulated voice couldn't quiet her. Finally we resorted to the gesture of the shaken finger, the scowl, the angry tone of voice. Just one such try and the crying was never again resumed.

Then there was Kathy, a quiet, withdrawn ten year old with some talent in drawing. Only after permitting her to do a great deal of free art work did she really begin to speak. But when she began to explain her work with crayons and paint, the words came with a rush.

I have hoped to illustrate two basic problems in working with the slow learner which precede in importance the matters of reading and writing. I sometimes like to think of communication as a broad, dual highway. Two of the lanes come toward you. They might appropriately be labeled listening and reading. Two move in opposite directions and may be called speaking and writing. With the slow learner there are difficulties in these easy lanes of listening and speaking which we

find difficult to comprehend—yet if we permit them to continue disregarded they serve as effective barriers to reading and writing. Even with understanding, our next step is often an experiment and not necessarily an answer.

With our five little men, for example, we tried to make provision for their taking physical education with four other first grade classes. Our reason was that there they could see together both words and action as the teacher introduced new games and reviewed the instructions for old ones. Our little girl who watched only pictures now sits at the right hand side of the teacher so that while the story is being read she can hear and see at the same time. Again these are not answers but an attempt to widen gaps in a wall to let in light.

We sometimes think that many of our problems could be solved if we were able to place all slow learners in classes by themselves. In some cases this is impossible. Furthermore, the term "slow" is a relative term. If we have a special class for children from 50 to 80 there is always the 83 I.Q. child who could benefit from the program and the 77 I.Q. child who could adjust to regular class. In a central school as in other schools we are always faced with the problem of what to do with those who are borderline cases.

It goes without saying that the entire area of readiness—an area in which there is practice in listening and speaking, training in acquiring those words that are common to the group and make possible a participation in play and the activities of others in the group—is more important for the slow learner than it is for a brighter

child. Concrete experiences are equally important, serving as three-dimensional illustrations of words in group use. Yet this period of readiness is a trying one for both teacher and child. It is difficult for a teacher to perceive a gain in oral vocabulary by a given child. It is equally frustrating for the child to see the rest of his classmates busy with books and not be permitted to have one. Only an intimate and sympathetic understanding of the child can help in such a situation—something often made impossible by large classes and outside demands.

One of the experiments that we have tried recently has been to make sure that every slow learner has his own coloring book or scrap book with crayons. In a few instances where cutting and pasting were a little bit beyond the child's present abilities we found that this was a particularly good area to encourage cooperation and help from a more able child. It is true that a coloring book or scrapbook is not necessarily the book that the first or second reading group may be using—and yet it is a book, and as such is an important foundation stone in building some structure of confidence and self-esteem.

Just recently I went with one of my teachers to visit the home of a child of low I.Q. Although I live only 60 miles from New York City, I was quite unprepared for what we found. The house, a ramshackle one with windows missing in the upper story, was located three hundred yards up a path from a dirt road. There was no electricity. Heat came from a kerosene stove placed in the center of the kitchen. Dirt and dust lay everywhere, and a pail of water with an old-fashioned

dipper occupied a position of prominence in the center of the kitchen table. It was not hard to understand, after seeing the home, why the children from this home liked to play with the water fountains in school, why they often said they wished they did not have to go home when the dismissal bell rang, and why their divergence from a background common to other children made it difficult for them to communicate with others in the class.

"How," I thought, as I left the malodorous kitchen, "can stories about Dick and Jane, Alice and Jerry, and a host of other well washed children from the pages of basal readers, who live and play in comfortable surroundings, have any meaning for these children?"

When is a child ready to read? There is difference among the experts, but quite often the magic number 6 comes into the discussions—(some say 6.5) and yet 6 is a convenient and easily remembered milestone. Because a six-year-old with 80 I.Q. would have a mental age of only 4.8, it may be seen that he may have some time to wait before he is ready to read. For a few children this is as late as the end of the second grade or the beginning of the third.

Can we teach the slow learner to read? In almost all cases, yes, sometimes surprisingly far beyond the level at which we might expect him to perform. I have seen many slow learners reading reasonably well at a 3rd or 4th grade level; that is, measured by whether the child could recognize the words and whether he could remember the story in a 3rd or 4th grade basal reader. It must be remembered, however, that as a child progresses through

school, our measure of reading skills becomes more complex. We place increasing emphasis upon comprehension, interpretation, understanding of figurative language. It is in many of these areas that the slow learner tends to fail.

There are variables even here. Generally speaking we can say that even with slow learners, once we find an area of interest, experience, and general background, the child is often able to work in this area at one or even two years beyond his normally expected level. Somewhere here, we perceive the difference in context for the slow learner and for the average child.

Normally, we consider the context of a word as that total environment in which the word may appear. For us the total environment refers to other words. For the slow learner a context is more useful if it is a picture, a diagram, a gesture, or a tone.

A distinctive shape or length of a word may be of equal importance. Color, location, and size such as the "stop" sign at the end of the street, all provide a context.

I am not sure that we should be so concerned with length of words as far as slow learners are concerned, as with their use and meaning. Examined from this point of view not all of the little words in a beginning reader stand up well. Leave "and" or "are" out of a sentence and you still have some meaning.

In one project with a group of older boys ranging in intelligence from 60 to

80 we had an extreme number of non-readers. These were older boys, and they had come through the school system without an organized effort to do something for them. Suddenly help was available. Where should we start?

It was forcibly brought to our attention on one local trip that almost none of them could tell a story merely by the name on the store front. At the same time they were able to tell a hardware store from a drug store, a bank from a post office. Our reading project at that particular time may have departed far from the general rules, for we began with such words as *Orange County Bank, Strong's Drug Store, No Parking, School Bus #13, Boys' Room, Erie Street, and Cafeteria*. Photographs of the buildings, diagrams, a huge map of the village, and the making of signs were among some of the props that we used.

In summary we may say:

First let us regard language arts as a flight of stairs: the first step listening, the second speaking, the third step reading, the fourth writing. With a slow learner let us never forget the amount of time we need to spend on the first two stairs.

Second, let us not forget to explore beyond this limited concept of communication, and utilize all the possibilities of such diverse elements as drawing, dancing, pantomime, and other forms of physical expression.

Writing in the Intermediate Grades

An examination of the literature of research concerning writing in the intermediate grades reveals results which are, to some extent, conflicting and inconclusive. Though a considerable amount of research has been done in the total area of writing, comparatively little of it has dealt with elementary school children. A good portion of that done is limited in terms of major generalizations which can be derived from it. There are, however, a number of studies about writing in the intermediate grades contributing significantly to instructional improvement.

The literature reveals that most of the investigations in writing tend to group themselves around the following major areas:

1. Writing as a way of identifying and motivating gifted pupils
2. Experiences forming the bases for children's stories
3. Pupil interests and the selection of writing topics
4. Methods and materials appropriate for teaching writing
5. Writing and total personal development

During the first half of the twentieth century there has been an almost overwhelming shift of communication from writing to oral forms of language, through the use of the telephone, radio, and television. At the same time, rapid changes have taken place in other facets of modern living. It would seem that because of these vast changes, there is an increased need for writing as a permanent form of communication. Writing ideas down makes it easier to examine, criticize, and correct them. Careful writing might be looked upon by some as a device for teaching careful reading, but it is also infinitely more both for author and reader.

Writing as a Way of Identifying and Motivating Gifted Children

A recent study by Witty and Martin (24) has dealt with the potential of silent films in building interest and motivation for creative expression. Witty especially noted the quality of the compositions written by gifted pupils of the sample and pointed out that compositions themselves are a significant means of identifying the gifted pupil.

Using a film to build interest and to create a reservoir of feeling is one thing, but to use films to predetermine children's writing content is another. Perhaps this question is pertinent to the procedure used in Witty and Martin's study.

More than 2,000 pupils were shown the film, *The Hunter and the Forest*. Although the eight-minute film has no dialogue, it does include a musical background and sound effects marking the appearance of birds and animals.

The film was introduced as "a story without words." At the end of the film, the pupils were asked to write their own stories about the film experience. A film guide developed especially for teachers suggested related language experiences and guided teachers in helping the children write.

Criteria for judging the children's compositions are as follows:

1. The expression of genuine feeling
2. Sensitivity of particular words, phrases, and larger language units in expressing their feelings
3. Response to the film maker's intent and to the materials presented
4. Use of correct and appropriate English

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Although there was no grade-by-grade breakdown with regard to quality, approximately 60 per cent of the children were reported to have written effective prose or poetry. Ten per cent of the total number of compositions were rated outstanding. Another 189 or nine per cent of the group were rated good, and 320, 16 per cent, were judged poor.

Stories and poems written by intermediate grade children were described by Witty and Martin as more detailed and imaginative than those done in primary grades. According to Witty and Martin, many of the pupils had definitely mastered the basic writing skills of expressing themselves clearly and artistically by the end of the sixth grade. In the fourth grade, pupils wrote longer compositions than did those of the earlier grades; their products were of a more imaginative nature and included a greater amount of poetry. The fourth grade pupils frequently attempted to pass judgment upon the actions of the main character. The writing of the fifth and sixth grade pupils was reported to be distinctly superior to that of the lower grades.

Although the sixth grade pupils were said to have acquired the necessary skills to express themselves clearly and creatively, their compositions varied in length from short paragraphs to five and six pages. Sixth graders also reacted more frequently to the symbolism of the film and tended more often than pupils in the earlier grades to interpret the film. Finally, they more often used unique expression and originality in form; "greater use of metaphor and original fresh language of a humorous type" characterized their work.

These findings, reported in Witty and Martin's study, demonstrate that the silent film is a valuable instrument for stimulating creative expression, and consequently for identifying pupils who show outstanding talent through their compositions.

The high correlation between intelligence

and language development was cited in a study of an exceptionally gifted pupil by Witty and Blumenthal (23). Creative written expression is an area in which the gifted child can find continuous challenge and satisfaction of achievement.

Experiences Forming the Bases for Children's Stories

In general agreement with Witty's findings that children write well from vicarious experiences are those of Edmund (7). The latter analyzed the stories of a sample of 90 seventh-grade pupils selected at random to determine the relationship between their prior experiences and the quality of their creative writing.

Creative quality was defined in terms of originality, wealth, and value of ideas in a story, and the facility of the writing. Experience was dichotomized into *direct* and *derived*. Direct experience included that which actually and directly involved the writer—people and places he had known first-hand. Derived experiences were those acquired through books, radio, television, films, and other vicarious means. Statistical analysis of the stories resulted in a rather high relationship between derived experience and creative quality. In fact, the relationship was significant beyond the .01 level of confidence. Derived experience-based stories contained a significantly greater number of words and descriptive words than did direct experience-based stories. The two groups of writers did not differ in their desire to write stories nor in the number written during the school year; nor did they differ in intelligence.

In order to determine the variations of the derived-experience-creative-quality relationship between grades, Edmund (10) studied the stories of fifth-graders and ninth-graders, employing the same design and procedures as previously used with seventh-graders. At the fifth grade level, the findings were substantially the same as in the case of the seventh grade. However, at the ninth grade level, the relation-

ship between derived experience and creative quality was not significant at the .01 nor .05 levels of confidence (9). That is to say, pupils writing from direct experience wrote stories of approximately the same quality as did those writing from secondary experiences.

What do the above findings mean? There are a number of interpretations; for example, young children of our culture have a seeming preponderance of derived experiences. It becomes easier to imitate or project themselves through the ideas, forms, and styles of writing they have read and enjoyed than to master language appropriate for expressing their day-to-day experiences. Secondly, direct experience may require a gestation period before becoming useful in creative writing. Too often children are encouraged to catalogue events with little or no emphasis given to understanding and describing them. Finally, fifth and seventh grade pupils have not learned to observe, to understand, and to think creatively about what they have experienced first-hand.

It is entirely probable that the idea of writing about their own problems, failures, and successes does not readily occur to intermediate grade children. They need to feel that others would be interested in their aspirations and anxieties, and that writing about these personal concerns is a healthy and creative thing to do. At the same time, it is quite likely that too few elementary teachers encourage children to write about their experiences, choosing freely topics of their own interest. Edmund (12) found in a recent survey that more than half the children in the sample never had had the opportunity nor responsibility for choosing their own writing topic.

Children not only lack the proper encouragement about their problems, they actually lack adequate experiences. In a study of 127 seventh-graders of central New York, the writer discovered that the average number of stories written during a school year was less

than four, 3.98, to be precise (11). The survey was designed to determine the attitude of seventh grade children toward writing stories and obtaining information about their story-writing behavior.

A story was defined, in the above study, to include a narration of past events, an account of some incident, a report or statement, an anecdote, and narratives in prose or verse.

Seventy-three of the 127, fifty-eight per cent of the pupils, stated that they liked to write stories. The mean number of stories written by this group was 4.65 for the school year. Thirty-two of the seventy-three had written one or more stories outside of school.

Forty-three or thirty-two per cent of the total group stated that they did not like to write. The mean number of stories for this group was 2.08 for the school year. Most of their stories were written in school, with nine members reporting that they had written one or more stores outside of class assignment.

If the findings of this study are indicative of the emphasis currently placed on writing experiences of children, it appears obvious that more attention is necessary. That writing is important is unquestioned, yet the main reason why our children do not and cannot write well, may mean simply that we haven't taught them. Four compositions per year would hardly seem adequate to do the job.

Pupil Interests and the Selection of Writing Topics

Sofell (21) made a study in 1929, in which she attempted to determine if children's compositions based on self-chosen topics were superior in writing mechanics, organization, and literary quality to compositions based on assigned topics. Three hundred and four children, grades 4-6, from three Pittsburgh Schools wrote five compositions in a rotated manner. That is, the first, third, and fifth compositions were assigned and the second and fourth were "self-chosen." Two weeks elapsed between the

writing of each composition, with the study running from April 19 to June 14, 1929.

The subjects assigned were as follows:

1. What Can I Do to Promote Safety?
2. A Narrow Escape
3. How I Should Like to Spend My Vacation.

Thirty minutes were allotted for writing, and teachers gave no assistance to individual pupils, except in spelling words. The instructions to pupils differed only with regard to those concerning the topic. In one instance, the topic was assigned, but in the other the teacher stated that it was more fun to write about subjects of one's own interest.

The "Hillegas Scale" was used to rate the compositions. The averages made on all compositions written on self-chosen subjects were better than the averages made on all compositions of imposed subjects. However, she noted that the lower grades seemed to profit more from being allowed to choose their own subjects than the intermediate grades. The investigator pointed out also that assigned subjects of high interest value brought higher scores than uninteresting subjects, and that pupils showed a wide range of interests.

A more recent study of the effect of children's interests on their creative writing was that done by Edmund in 1958 (8). The investigator asked a sample of sixty-three fifth grade pupils to make a list of activities, ideas, objects, people and/or animals in which they were interested. One week after the lists were collected, each pupil was asked to write a story on any topic that interested him.

Pupil interests varied widely, with some pupils listing as many as fifteen different ones. However, the number of interests listed ranged from zero to fifteen. The mean number was 6.5. Swimming appeared most frequently, with baseball, football, and basketball appearing next in order. Reading, horses, and horse-back riding, collecting, and dancing also ranked near

the top of the list. It is interesting that reading ranked among the top activities in interest value. However, the more formal classroom subjects rated considerably lower than reading. Spelling was listed by nine pupils, social studies by three, arithmetic by two and English by one. Writing was listed by none.

The findings of Edmund's study showed that less than one third of the sample wrote about their stated personal interests, yet all the pupils participating were permitted to choose their writing topics. Why did pupils not select topics of personal interest?

In attempting to answer the question, the investigator has suggested two reasons why fifth grade pupils do not base their stories on genuine personal interests. First, they have not been taught to do so. Children, like adults, generally reveal their personal thoughts and feelings only to persons they trust completely. It becomes necessary for teachers to develop good relationships between teacher and pupil, and pupil and pupil.

Secondly, and equally important, children are not always able to identify their interests. While capitalizing on interests helps to develop written expression, written expression is a good way of helping children identify and develop interests, including an interest in good literature.

Methods and Materials for Teaching Writing

Various kinds of motivating techniques have been centered around books. Rideout (19) reported a study in which a group of fifty-seven seventh-graders wrote books, bound them, displayed them at the public library and discussed them from the local radio station. As a result of the book binding project, Rideout enumerates several possible learnings derived from it:

Pride in work well done, how to cooperate with each other, appreciation for home and community with power of words, that writing is good leisure time activity, and that it helps improve usage.

In 1943, Smith (20) made an extensive study of procedures for encouraging creative writing. The investigation involved a population of 17,941 pupils and 508 teachers selected from 40 elementary school systems. Pupils were heterogeneously grouped with respect to general ability and ethnic background. Ten thousand four hundred forty-seven pupils and 342 teachers from eleven of the 40 school systems were selected for detailed study.

Smith defined creative writing as any writing in which the pupil is free to choose the time of composing, the subject matter, and the length and form of the composition. She analyzed teacher responses to questionnaires, observed writing in the classroom, interviewed teachers, pupils, and administrators, and analyzed the creative writing of the children.

Ninety-five per cent of the sample, according to the investigator, achieved successful results. Findings of the study indicate the following procedures were most useful in encouraging creative writing:

1. providing attractive classrooms, rich in materials
2. encouraging pupils to write from their own interests and needs
3. providing rich experiences about which a child can express himself
4. developing sensitivity to good writing which in turn helps a child improve his own experience
5. using real needs of children or helping them develop new ones
6. providing freedom from fear and helping pupils gain confidence in their ability to create
7. providing abundant time and opportunity for writing in many areas and in many forms
8. developing skill in mechanics without sacrificing spontaneity
9. sharing the end products of writing
10. evaluating the writing in terms of the total growth of the child

Smith reported several other procedures which were considered controversial in nature.

For example, slightly more than half of the teachers questioned or reported negatively on these techniques: (1) encouraging pupils to plan and think through what they have to express before writing, (2) guidance through dictating or writing, (3) encouraging pupils to check content and mechanics of their writing, (4) experimentation with colorful words, (5) experimenting with words or other vocabulary study, (6) publishing children's writing in the school newspaper, and (7) encouraging children to evaluate their creative products.

Three approaches to creative writing are discussed by Creed (6). The first one requires preparing yourself for writing. Pick a favorite word, and explore its meaning. Secondly, explore what to write about, and third, keep at it. Creative thinking is a requirement, she stated, but she thinks it is possible to "train yourself to write in your mind."

Listening is one area of the language arts which has received comparatively little attention. Certainly it has not been widely considered as a means of developing ability. However, Burrows (2) has strongly emphasized the interrelationship between writing and listening. There are two recent studies supporting Burrows' view.

Treanor (22) described an approach which involved listening before writing. The pupils listed and discussed sounds they would expect to hear in familiar situations, for example, in the circus. Twenty-minute oral lessons were held three times a week. Treanor did not report the number of pupils in his study nor did he make any statistical estimate of the method's effectiveness. He did, however, state that listening experience as described, contributes to "ideas" for composition, and implied that fourth graders in his selection found the method helpful in their writing. Perhaps Treanor's hypothesis will be tested more rigorously in future studies.

Another study in listening with significant

implications for writing is that of Moyer (17). A control group and an experimental group of seventy-three pupils each, from grades four, six, and eight received ear training through the use of tape recorders for two sixteen-week periods. No written exercises were used. Instruction periods were given to recording and analyzing the effectiveness of the language in the stories, reports and so on.

At the end of the experiment, pupils of the experimental group from each grade level made greater progress than did those of the control, in language usage. Other results reported were the high motivating value of ear training through the use of the tape recordings, the improvement of attitudes about language as a tool, and the improvement of speech habits.

Moyer concluded that where ear training is used as a method for improving oral communication, it might be combined with written instruction based on the needs of pupils to write about their own feelings, ideas, and experiences.

In 1906, Colvin and Meyer (5) reported a study done to obtain data on the growth of the imagination in school children and its relation to other elements in children's mental life. They analyzed 3,000 compositions of pupils in grades four through twelve to determine their imaginative content. Pupils from these grades wrote on one of the following topics:

A Funny Story I Have Read or Heard
What I See On My Way to School
How the Flowers Were Colored
A Fairy Story
A Good Joke

High school pupils had a slightly wider choice, as noted in the following topics:

A Voyage in an Airship in the Year 2000
How the Flowers Got Their Colors
What I Can See With My Eyes Shut
My First Visit to the Theater
Adventures of a School Desk
Displays in the Shop Windows
A Laughable Story

A Poor Family
A Comical Character
The Woods in Autumn
Jokes I Have Played

Subjects participating in the study received no help from teachers regarding content or its treatment. The assignment was handled as a part of the pupils' regular work.

A record was made of the visual, auditory, tactile, pain, olfactory, gustatory, organic, and muscular images. These were assessed as the more simple forms of imagery and termed the "lower types." The more complex types were categorized as scientific, fairy story, nature myth, heroic, dramatic, religious, and melancholic images. They were labeled "higher types."

The science category included machines and devices, uses for electricity, and other natural forces. The fairy story and nature myth included pixies, goblins and so on. In the heroic grouping were stories concerning virtues as self-forgetfulness, courage, and devotion, while striking situations and stirring climaxes characterized the dramatic. The religious involved the supernatural and devotional. Melancholic images were concerned with feelings of sadness and depression.

The investigators concluded that in general, imagination of school children showed a decline during the years studied. While they stated the possibility that the decline in children's imagination might be due, to some degree, to the reticence of adolescent youth to express their vital feelings, Colvin and Meyer suggested that the decline was probably due to the lack of educational effort to cultivate imagination in children. In fact, they suggested that school influence toward the development of imagination was negative rather than positive.

Visual imagination was the only kind or type showing growth throughout the grades and the investigators report that it was largely devitalized and mechanical. At the onset of puberty there was a tendency for the "lower

types" of imagery to disappear and for the "higher types" to come into prominence. This tendency, however, was slight and not considered significant. Growth of feeling was reported to be constant, and formal correctness improved thought.

A final interesting conclusion was that there seemed to be little room for humor in school work—that humor tended to decline from grade to grade. The schools placed a premium on mechanical exactness and formal correctness and ignored, if not actually hindered, expression of the "deeper self." Though the above study was reported in 1906, this writer believes that the questions it has raised are still sufficiently significant to be carefully considered today.

Several investigators have attempted to check the responses of pupils through various kinds of writing situations. Clark³ taught thirty-six sixth grade children an hour a day for one school year. He presented them with twenty-one different kinds of writing situations which evolved as the class went along, and in addition the children wrote several compositions voluntarily. The situations ranged from topics such as "A Stitch in Time," and letters to pen pals in Japan to reactions to pictures on a bulletin board, and highly personal compositions. The only criteria for writing were: Does your composition adequately express your feelings? Does it say what you would like it to say? Does it satisfy you? The findings appear below:

1. Children wrote longer sentences and used more dependent clauses in their highly personal writings.
2. A subjective analysis of the writing done led the investigator to believe that when children wrote about themselves—their feelings and emotions—they responded freely and usually achieved highest quality and interests.
3. Better writing was done on impersonal subjects when the writer told how he felt about it.

4. Children responded best to situations which were highly personal.

The investigator concluded that the greater percentage of a child's writing should be concerned with his personal experiences.

Clark's conclusion represents the thinking of a number of writers in the creative writing field. For example, the authors of a recent text on language arts for elementary school children state that: "Motivation is stronger when a child can express his own ideas and experiences. The language is more colorful and vivid (18).

Three methods of developing imagination in pupils' writing are reported by Littwin (15). He worked with equated groups of seventh and eighth graders who were tested on two compositions, one at the beginning and one at the end of a ten week period. The methods consisted of picture study, literary models, and sense training. The procedure was described as follows:

1. The pupils looked at a picture, described it together, then each pupil took one look at it and wrote for ten minutes.
2. The pupils studied picture-making words, wrote them and discussed how the author made pictures, and then wrote for a ten minute period.
3. Pupils were given visual and audio preparation; for example, they took a piece of fruit, felt it, smelled it, looked at it, tapped and tasted it. Then they were asked to describe it in ten minutes.

The stories were rated on the Van Wageningen scale. The best results were obtained through developing power in imagination by use of sense training, next by models, and least by picture study. The experimenter concluded that first-hand experiences are more effective in developing imagination than experiences of a vicarious or second-hand nature. Note that Littwin's findings are somewhat in conflict with those of Edmund, with regard to the quality of creative writing based on direct experiences

done by fifth and seventh grade children.

Garbe (13) reported a study done in 1930, in which she found that sixth grade pupils correlating English compositions with content subjects showed a marked growth in fluency of expression, as indicated by three criteria: the number of words used in the initial and final composition, the number of compositions written, and the reduction in the percentage of errors between the initial and final composition. As a result of the investigation, Garbe concluded that children may be expected to write freely when encouraged to do so. She stated that some increase in the number of errors is likely as the form becomes more complex. However, she suggested that the rules of grammar be taught as a means of improving the communication of the writer's ideas. Although Garbe expressed concern for the creative aspects of children's writing, her evaluation appears to be preoccupied with writing mechanics.

Leonard (14) reported a study by Willing and Whitman done at the Lincoln School, Columbia University in 1926, involving two groups of 19 eighth grade pupils equated on the basis of composition correctness and in related matters. Whitman taught one group by means of weekly assigned themes written in class, checked by him outside, and then read and criticized by pupils in class. Approximately 100 minutes per week was devoted to written work. The other group, taught by Willing, was given 20 minutes drill daily in proofreading, "individualized according to preliminary diagnosis of needs." No writing was required. Both Whitman and Willing conducted all aspects of writing, other than proofreading drill, in exactly the same way. The experiment ran from November 1 to April 1. The stories of pupils given 20 minutes daily drill, according to Leonard, were superior to the one-composition-a-week group in reducing errors in composition.

Lyman (16) directed a study employing 31

teachers working with 1,039 pupils of grades 6, 7, 8, and 9, in 20 junior high school and in elementary schools located in the vicinity of Chicago to determine the extent junior high school age children could be taught to discover and correct language errors in their own compositions. Secondly, he sought to determine the extent to which a limited number of experiences in composition can establish work patterns, and finally, to determine the effects of five consecutive weeks of laboratory work upon the quality of children's compositions.

Pupils of the sample wrote seven compositions, beginning with one written on the assigned topic, "When I Got What I Deserved," and designated the "pretest." Following the pretest, compositions 1-5, inclusive, were written in the order listed:

- Composition 1. My Favorite Sport
- Composition 2. The Class I Like Best in School
- Composition 3. A Good Playmate, Plaything or Pet
A Kind Deed I Tried To Do (choice of one)
How I Did an Errand
- Composition 4. My Funny Experience as a Carpenter, Cook, A Housekeeper or Repairman. (choice of one)
Things I Would Do With \$500
Funny Mistakes I Have Made
- Composition 5. Mischief My Kid Brother (or Sister) Get Into (choice of one)
Some Things I Know about Birds (or _____ any noun substituted for birds)

During the class period on Monday, the topic was assigned and a plan in the form of a diagram was made by each pupil. On Tuesday, each using his own plan, wrote the first draft of his composition. He carefully examined his first draft on Wednesday, attempted to dis-

cover and correct all errors, and made other changes which he believed would improve the composition. This usually required about 15 minutes. Each pupil copied his composition on Thursday, observing his own corrections, with the idea of turning in the finished copy.

Teachers assisted pupils in discovering errors on composition 1 only. Compositions 1-5 were followed by the "final test," a composition written on the assigned topic: "What I Like to Do on A Holiday." Pupils were permitted to use portions of class time for four days or write the composition all at once. They were allowed to follow or not follow a plan, as they saw fit.

Patterns for planning compositions in the form of a series of diagrammatic representations of wholes made up of parts, were introduced in composition 2. For example, Lyman reported that a story about a Ford car might follow this chain-link pattern: It is cheap; it always goes; it is easy to drive. Each statement would be contained in a chain link, and each pupil wrote his composition, corrected and re-wrote it as described above.

Lyman reported that results of the "final test" showed that pupils of the sample discovered and corrected three-fifths of their own errors. Though no objective evidence was reportedly derived from the experiment to indicate the degree to which the "Composition cycle" was established as a pattern of work, teachers stated that all but a few pupils separated the work of composition into the five stages described above.

One hundred eighty-three sixth grade pupils showed a median gain of .50 in composition growth, as measured by the "Wisconsin Scale for the Judgment of Composition Quality." This amount of growth is regarded as the normal for one year by junior high pupils. Neither the 283 seventh graders nor the 259 eighth graders were reported to have made appreciable improvement. The investigator made no at-

tempt to explain the significant gains of the sixth graders as compared with the other grades represented in the study.

Creative Writing and Personality Development

Cole⁴ stressed the value of having children write about their problems. She stated that they feel a real need for writing about their own problems and that something good is learned from writing about them. Cole's conclusion is based upon her success in helping thirty-five children with behavior problems. Writing has a therapeutic value for all children, concluded Cole, whether they have behavior problems or not.

Burrows (1) and Cole (4) have pointed out that children will be able to meet their daily problems to the extent that we can help them communicate successfully. Children's stories often reveal that they do have numerous conflicts. Food and clothing and sometimes boy-girl relationships are examples of how everyday concerns can become major problems for some children.

Creative writing, according to Burrows, (2) is more than an art form. She has stated:

It offers opportunities for the projection of personal power to a sympathetic listener. The interaction of writer and audience is reciprocal, active, releasing. Imaginative, subjective expression, it would seem, can serve emotional needs as a stabilizing, constructing force. But other kinds of written expression also serve personality development.

No careful reader can seriously doubt the existence of a strong relationship between written expression and personality development, after examining the case studies presented in chapter six of Burrow's extraordinary book on children's writing. While she and her co-workers made no attempt to measure specifics of writing in any statistically rigorous manner, the samples of children's writings from the four year on-the-job study, offer unmistakable evi-

dence of personality development and writing growth. The selections of writing, the procedures outlined, and the principles derived from the Burrows study, provide an excellent background for those interested in furthering research in children's writing. Determining cause-and-effect relationships between personality development and such art forms as writing seems to this writer to be an especially fruitful area for further research.

Summary

Witty has pointed out that identifying gifted pupils through their writing is both practical and profitable. Witty and Blumenthal discussed the high relationship between intelligence and language ability. Obviously creative writing grows out of all kinds of experience and is an activity calling for high order mental behavior. However, it can be both challenging to the gifted child and satisfying to the slow learner, where in the one case quality of the end product is stressed to a high degree and in the other, the major emphasis is placed upon the enjoyment of the creative process.

The findings of Edmund showed that high quality creative writing results from sources of derived experience. However, the relationship between the quality of creative writing and derived experience ceased to be statistically significant by the ninth grade level.

Soffell suggested permitting pupils to choose their own writing topics as a means of reducing errors of usage and improving literary quality. Edmund's work indicated that intermediate grade pupils are not frequently allowed to choose their own topics for writing, and less than a third of them select topics of personal interest when permitted to select topics independently.

Methods described by Rideout, Creed, Colvin and Meyer, Clark and Littwin, Garbe, Leonard, and Lyman and others were discussed. In general, methods outlined by these writers

appear to be consistent, and to reinforce each other.

The work of Burrows, Ferebee, Jackson and Saunders, though not designed as a formal study, is extensive compared to that of any other individual or group working within the area of children's writing. Their work touches upon all aspects of writing herein discussed and goes far beyond.

This examination of the research in writing of intermediate grade children discloses seemingly few conflicting findings regarding writing and effective methods for producing it on a high quality level. Those conflicts occurring may well be due to failure in rigorously applying scientific methods. In other instances, the casual factor may have been ascribed to what may be only a partial cause. Some conflicts of opinion inevitably arise when conclusion and high order abstractions go beyond the facts of the data obtained.

Careful readers will note that much of the work reported in this chapter does not meet the criteria for rigorous research. Comparatively little research has been done in creative writing, especially in the intermediate grades. It is hoped that this discussion has raised significant questions in the minds of readers, which may be answered through better designed research.

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The NCTE Committee on Linguistic Terminology will hold an invitational meeting during the annual convention in Denver, from 10:30 a.m. to 12 m., Friday, November 27. The purpose is to discuss problems of language nomenclature raised by the applications of modern linguistics analysis in textbooks.

The committee feels the need for a meeting in which elementary and secondary school teachers participate. Attendance will be limited to 35. Anyone wishing to attend should write the chairman, Professor Harold B. Allen, Department of English, University of Minnesota, Minneapolis. It will be useful to include any relevant information, including the school position and any special interest in the topic.

Language Arts Research, 1958

The following compilation of 284 research studies in the language arts areas is the second of a series sponsored by the National Conference on Research in English and the Research Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English. The first appeared in the April, 1957 issue of *Elementary English* magazine, and reported 289 studies under way during the calendar year 1956.

Information concerning these research studies was obtained from members of the National Conference, and also from faculty members guiding research throughout the country. Four copies of a questionnaire were sent to 250 deans of graduate schools in the United States, requesting that copies be sent to interested faculty members. Returns were received from 62 individuals.

Only studies completed during 1958, or reported in progress during that year are reported. Materials which are cataloged elsewhere—books and periodical articles, for instance—are not reported in this compilation. Research on the Master's, Doctoral, and Post-Doctoral level are listed alphabetically by author in eighteen categories.

Literary criticism was not considered for inclusion in this compilation. Much literary research cannot be considered as pertinent to the development of the language arts, and other summaries are available to students of literature. The research studies in speech correction and theatre are probably not an adequate sample of the work going on in these areas, but they were nevertheless reported, and so appear.

The National Conference on Research in English and the Research Committee of the National Council of Teachers of English are not undertaking to evaluate the significance of these studies, but are merely reporting the re-

search which is going on in the language arts field. The cooperation of the many directors of research throughout the country who reported the work in progress is gratefully acknowledged. David Russell, Chairman of the Research Committee of the NCTE, also cooperated in many ways.

The current activities of the NCRE might be of interest to those concerned with research. Through the cooperation of the NCTE, Research Bulletins in various areas have been published and are available through the office of the National Council. Recently, a summary of the studies in Reading in the High School was published under the chairmanship of M. Agnella Gunn of Boston University. A summary of the studies on children's writing has just appeared. Alvina Treut Burrows of New York University obtained the cooperation of experts in the children's writing field for this bulletin. Elona Sochor of Temple University has collected a series of articles on Critical Reading for the 1960 NCRE research bulletin. Carlton Singleton of the University of Iowa plans an important bulletin on Research Techniques in the Language Arts for 1961.

Information about the National Conference on Research in English may be obtained by writing the secretary-treasurer, Dr. Margaret Early, 508 University Place, Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York. The current officers, in addition to Dr. Early, are: President, Ralph C. Staiger, Mississippi Southern College, Vice-President, Helen Robinson, University of Chicago, Past President, Thomas Horn, University of Texas, and Executive Committee member, Emery Bliesmer, University of Virginia.

Dr. Staiger is Director of the Reading Clinic at Mississippi Southern College, Hattisburg, Mississippi.

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Councilletter

News of the Year

In summarizing the major achievements of the Council for 1959, your President will find it more difficult to know what to omit than what to include. For who can do justice to an organization of over 52,000 members, with 143 Affiliates and thirty-six active committees? The details will be supplied to each member of our Board of Directors in our Annual Report. I can mention in the space allotted to me only a few of the achievements that seem most significant to me.

Keeping in mind the major reason for the existence of the Council—the improvement of instruction in all phases of English at all levels of instruction—we must indeed be grateful to the editors of our five journals who have selected such excellent articles throughout the year. Every month scores of articles have appeared, representing the finest thinking of some of our outstanding teachers in the country. It would be safe to say that in no other discipline has there been such excellent material and in such abundance.

Several special publications have appeared of which we may be truly proud. By this time every member of the Council has received a copy of the *Basic Issues in the Teaching of English*, an outstanding example of clear thinking and brilliant writing, culminating from a series of joint conferences with the Modern Language Association, the College English Association, and the American Studies Association. The document represents a consensus of the thinking of twenty-eight representatives of the

four sponsoring organizations, under the wise leadership of Albert M. Marckwardt of the University of Michigan. The document deserves your careful study whether you are a classroom teacher, a supervisor or administrator. We fervently hope now that foundation funds may be obtained to permit an experimental study of ways to solve some of the problems which have been designated as Basic Issues. But teachers need not wait until some massive experiment is launched. The document makes recommendations which can be carried out by every classroom teacher, every department of English, and every school. What an advance would take place if such a concentrated effort were made!

Another publication for which we have all been waiting eagerly is the report of the Committee on English for Superior Students, prepared under the Chairmanship of Arno Jewett of the U. S. Office of Education. This will appear as a joint publication of NCTE and NEA and will be distributed to our secondary section members, who have long been trying to meet the needs of our many gifted students.

R. C. Simmonini's Committee on International Cooperation has prepared a *Roster of English Associations*, which indicates how many colleagues we have in many lands, and how some day the dream of an International Council of Teachers of English may become a reality.

Among the significant works in progress are Volumes IV and V of the report of the Commission on the English Curriculum. The

former, under James A. Work's leadership, will deal with the teaching of English in the colleges and universities. The latter, under the chairmanship of Alfred Grommon, will contain recommendations for programs of teacher education in the English Language Arts. Another publication soon to appear will be the report of our Committee on Preparation and Certification of Teachers, which should do much to influence teacher preparation throughout the country.

The Council, however, is much more than a publishing agency, important as that function is. In the past year, to help with the continued improvement and upgrading of teachers, it has co-sponsored nineteen workshops, the largest number to date. Many of the Council's most distinguished members have appeared at one or more workshops to deliver keynote speeches or to participate in the section meetings.

The Commission on the Profession, under the leadership of Brice Harris, organized in 1958, has held several meetings, and has made plans for special activities at our Denver meeting. We shall hear much from this newest of our Commissions in the not too distant future of ways to give our profession new status, greater dignity, and increased significance in national and international life.

The Council has long maintained cordial relationships with other educational organizations, and some of these should be mentioned. Our representatives spoke at a special panel of the International Reading Association when it met in May in Toronto. Likewise, we were well represented at the 14th Annual Meeting on Teacher Education and Preparation at the University of Kansas. There Donald Tuttle of Fenn College and Eugene R. Slaughter performed in a most distinguished manner. Former President Thomas C. Pollock represented us in New York at the meeting of the Council of National Organizations for the White House Conference on Children and Youth in 1960. We shall be represented at the Conference when it meets in Washington and have already

submitted considerable materials which reflect our present accomplishments and future plans. We were represented at the Seventh Conference of the U. S. Commission on UNESCO in Denver in September, at the meeting of the English Division of the American Society for Engineering Education in Pittsburgh in June, and at the Social Legislation Information Service in Washington in February, as well as at other significant meetings.

Effective as the Council has been in its long history in serving its members, it will render even greater service when its own building will be completed some time in 1960. For in the past year the final legal steps were taken to make it possible to begin construction of our own headquarters on the campus of the University of Illinois at Champaign. Thus another dream which many have had will finally be realized, perhaps even in time to celebrate our Golden Anniversary.

One cannot chronicle the many significant achievements of the Council for 1959 without at the same time mentioning events in the teaching profession which are indicative of progress. Thus the publication of the Conant Report, with its emphasis on written composition, smaller classes, and four years of English in every high school, has been of great assistance to the Council, which has for years been making the same kind of recommendations. More and more communities are trying to implement Dr. Conant's recommendations, particularly with respect to smaller classes to permit more effective work with composition.

It is always a pleasure to note the formation of new Affiliates of the Council, and among those whose first annual meeting was held in 1959 was the Wisconsin Council of Teachers of English, for which Jarvis Bush, long familiar to our Board of Directors, worked so hard. For the first time also, the various California Councils met in San Francisco in April at the same time that the CCCC met. James R. Squire's leadership as local chairman made the occasion



a most memorable one.

At least one new regional magazine appeared during the year, the *Midwest English Review*, edited by Thomas H. Wetmore of Ball State Teachers College at Muncie, Indiana. It takes its place beside the many other distinguished magazines which have served their local organizations and areas these many years. Our best wishes to Editor Wetmore in his venture!

Among the international services of the Council are the Study Tours, which this summer were so ably conducted by Brice Harris and Donald Tuttle. Plans are already under way for the 1960 tour. Several new features of especial interest to English teachers characterized the 1959 series, and the 1960 offerings appear even richer.

All these many accomplishments, of which we can all be justly proud, are eloquent testimony to the dynamism of the Council and of its members. There is no better way to realize this than to travel as your president has done throughout the country, addressing many of our Affiliates. On more than thirty occasions throughout this year he has had the privilege of meeting colleagues at their various local conventions, workshops, and special occasions. The gracious hospitality everywhere shown will never be forgotten. There is no better way to realize our common professional problems and to feel the pulse of our professional life.

To those of you who will be coming to Denver for our 49th Annual Convention, a real treat has been prepared by Second Vice President G. Robert Carlsen and our Section Chairmen. They began thinking about the program almost at the end of the last one. No one will want to miss our Banquet and Luncheon speakers, John Ciardi, Elizabeth Janeway, Edmund Fuller, and our opening speaker President George N. Shuster of Hunter College of New York City. Nothing has been left undone by the local committee in Denver to make you comfortable while you are there. We sincerely hope that the theme chosen, "English Meets the Challenge" will truly meet some of the major challenges of our profession.

Your president cannot close without expressing his deepest gratitude to his colleagues on the Executive Committee who have labored so unceasingly on your behalf throughout the year. Last but not least, he owes a debt which all recent presidents have owed to J. N. Hook, our Executive Secretary, who by his industry, wisdom, and acumen has done so much to make the Council grow in so many directions and so many services. To all of you, sincere thanks for the great privilege of serving at a great moment in our history.

JOSEPH MERSAND, PRESIDENT
National Council of Teachers
of English

Meet Dr. Mersand and the other leaders of
the Council at the reception for members in
Denver at Thanksgiving time.



The Popular Arts in the Classroom

Edited by ALICE SANKEY

Alice Sankey

Here to Stay

When visual aids were first introduced into classrooms, several families of a middlewestern religious sect removed their children from the public schools because they were "against movies."

Last summer, at a Writers' Conference in Indiana, several learned authors mentioned television as though it were a dirty word, despite the presence of a nationally-known and busy TV script writer.

Critics panned the Italian-made *Hercules*, yet children lined the streets waiting for the box-office to open.

There are a few diehards who think if they ignore new media they will go away, similar to the musicians who said "canned music" would never replace the pit orchestra.

It appears, dear, to be "bigger than both of us." While heads are being butted against the wall, the new mass media are bringing about the biggest changes in education methods in generations.

Overwhelming, not necessarily frightening, in implication are experiments in education now being readied.

The education television experiment being planned to beam classroom lessons to pupils in seven central states from an airplane 25,000 feet over Lafayette, Ind., is one example.

At the time the *Milwaukee Journal* carried a news story on the project (Sept. 17, 1959) the plan was about to be presented to the board of the Ford Foundation in New York City. The Foundation and, it was believed, one or more television firms were interested in it.

Financial backing required has been esti-

mated at six to eight million dollars. Whether the money to finance the project is forthcoming now or later the experiment itself shows the "handwriting on the wall."

The educators planning the experiment foresee it as a means whereby classroom instruction would be broadcast for a select group of elementary and high school pupils in Wisconsin, Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky and Michigan. It would be beamed to certain schools equipped to receive ultra-high frequency broadcasts over special channels (not over home sets.)

Education television officials believe it is feasible, although engineering difficulties must be uninked. The committee which has worked out the plan is headed by Samuel Brownell, superintendent of public schools in Detroit, Michigan, and former federal commissioner of education. Others are Novice G. Fawcett, president of Ohio State university; Frederick L. Hovde, president of Purdue university; Lyman V. Giner, dean of the college of education at the University of Kentucky and former president of the National Education association; E. E. Holt, superintendent of public instruction in Ohio; John W. Taylor, executive director of the educational television station in Chicago; Benjamin Willis, superintendent of Chicago public schools; Herman B Wells, president of Indiana university, and John Guy Fowlkes, professor of education at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, and head of a Ford Foundation financed school experiment in the state.

Miss Sankey of Racine, Wisconsin, newspaper woman and author, is a member of the Chicago Chapter of the Women's National Book Association.

Up to now, education programs have been broadcast only over closed circuit channels or over community education channels, and the new experiment, (with the required financial backing) would be the most unusual one in the field. Two broadcasts would be made simultaneously to elementary and high school pupils over different channels. The curriculum has not been worked out, and the earliest the plan could be put into effect would be next fall.

The proposed broadcasts from the airplane would carry up to a 200 mile radius from Lafayette.

What's ahead? Bouncing classroom lessons off the moon? Mars?

With science developing programs of education to come out of the blue, it stands to reason today's child must keep up with what's in the offing. The "best-informed children in the world," to quote a PTA speaker, are receiving some learning sandwiched between westerns, mysteries, spectaculars, cartoons, and dancing televiewing.

A fifth grade teacher, with a class studying marine life, suggested to the pupils that they watch *Bold Journey*, which dealt with an underwater adventure that week. The children called one another on the telephone to remind classmates to listen. They announced to their parents that they HAD to watch TV, "teacher said." Probably for the first time in weeks (children are not immune to comment about trashy televiewing) that particular batch of youngsters watched a television show without a feeling of guilt. Every week (until they started to be repeated) the "Bold Journey" TV shows attracted a fifth grade audience in the neighborhood.

A sixth grade teacher said she was surprised, and supposed others would be, if they knew how many children observed and listened to discussions of current events telecast in the early evening.

"How many parents read the news and discuss it with their children?" she asked.

If a book is mentioned, read or reviewed on a children's program, or hardly more than

mentioned on an adult program, the libraries receive calls and have copies on reserve sometimes weeks ahead. (Take note, authors who are looking down their noses at this "time waiting" medium.)

At random, this writer dialed television broadcasts timed to coincide with the children's hours at home. One was the "Story Teller" in Chicago, reading and showing illustrations of "Ali Baba." Another was "Mr. Wizard," showing a curious, bright young chap the inner-workings of a fire extinguisher, allowing the boy (the manner of each indicating the respect one should have for flames) to light the inflammable liquid and subsequently smother it with a chemical mixture the two had concocted.

Hercules, to the student of Greek mythology, is a hodge-podge movie, throwing in everything but the Grecian urn, but isn't it possible that it kindled enough interest in the ancient legends so that the children will want to read more about them?

Millions of homes have TV sets which millions of youngsters turn on at every possible opportunity. (Four cousins living in three different states ate lunch with "Uncle Johnny Coons" in our family, biding by his admonitions to "sit at least six feet away from the set, ask mother's permission" for this and that, and drank the "yummy" milk he advertised. They missed him when he went off the air.)

The same youngsters who are the guinea pigs in the home and school experiments in the modern media are the scientists, writers, and program producers of tomorrow. Are they learning the difference between "polluting" and "improving" their minds?

A book publisher chided a group of writers at a conference for letting their young audiences get away from them. He suggested "outwriting" the comic book authors.

Perhaps that is the answer on TV broadcasts. One of the big networks seems to have some such idea in mind.

(Continued on page 518)

Idea Inventory

War of 1812-14



Louise H. Mortensen

With the current popularity of the rousing ballad, "The Battle of New Orleans," a unit on that period might go over big. Andrew Jackson's victory, with the help of the Pirate Lafitte, January 8, 1815, was two weeks after the treaty of peace had been signed in Europe in December, 1814. *Andrew Jackson, An Initial Biography* by Genevieve Foster (Scribner 1951) for grades 4-6, *Andrew Jackson, Frontier Statesman* by Clara Ingram Judson (Follett 1954), and *Andrew Jackson* by Jeannette C. Nolan (Messner 1949) all tell the story of Old Hickory. *Black Falcon* by Armstrong Sperry (Winston) is the story of the son of a New Orleans planter and Jean Lafitte during the privateering raids by the pirate against the English in 1814. *The Pirate Lafitte and the Battle of New Orleans* by Robert Tallant (Random 1951) explains why the pirate joined the Americans. Although he helped win the Battle of New Orleans, we should not sentimentalize too much over him, as he was a genuine slave smuggler who brought over slaves from Africa after importation of slaves was forbidden in 1808.

Historians say that the War of 1812 really began around 1810 in the backwoods settlements, although when President Madison declared war on Great Britain in June 1812, he said it was to stop that country's boldness in impressing American seamen into the British Navy and to end the actions of British agents who were stirring up the Indians. (See "Books for the Northwest Territory," *Elementary English*; October, 1959). Actually, it was the "War Hawk" party of Congressmen, led by Henry Clay of Kentucky, who caused Mr. Madison to declare war, and on this continent it

was only a section of the larger conflict between the French and British under Napoleon and the Duke of Wellington in Europe. On the high seas, they were struggling for the trade routes to the rich Orient and America.

New books for children laid in this period include *Attack at Fort Lookout* by Col. Red Reeder (Duell 1959), about a frontier outpost in the Old Northwest on Lake Huron during the lull before the Indian attack at Tippecanoe in 1811. *The Long Hunt* by Charlie May Simon (Dutton 1952) is about the part taken by the Tennessee mountain people in the War of 1812-14. *The Lone Hunt* by William O. Steele (Harcourt 1956) has no international conflict, but is a lively picture of backwoodsmen of the Cumberland Plateau in 1810. *Pull Away, Boatman* by Ada Claire Darby (Lippincott 1953) is about New Madrid on the Missouri prairie in Louisiana Territory in 1811, the year of a flood, comet, and earthquake. *Ensign Ronan* by Leon E. Burgoyne (Winston) is about Fort Dearborn when the Potawatomi Indians attacked in August 1812. *Candle in the Night* by Elizabeth Howard (Morrow 1952) is Detroit during 1812, and *The Captive Island* by August Derleth (Aladdin 1952) is Mackinac during the period.

When Detroit surrendered to the British in August 1812, we lost the key post of the Old Northwest. The British invaded Ohio in April 1813, but General Harrison defeated them at

Mrs. Mortensen has degrees in English from Smith College and Columbia, with special work at the University of Iowa, New York University, and Drake University.

Fort Meigs. Captain Perry built a fleet at Erie, Pa., in the spring of 1813, and in September caused the surrender of a whole British squadron on Lake Erie, after which Harrison's soldiers crossed the lake to Canadian soil, where they defeated the forces of General Proctor and Tecumseh at the Battle of the Thames. *Pike of Pike's Peak* by Nina Brown Baker (Harcourt 1953) belongs in the list, as General Pike was killed in 1813 at the attack on York (now Toronto), Canada. Although he ordered his men not to burn the town, the Canadian Parliament buildings were burnt, and in retaliation, the British burned Washington in August, 1814.

General Brock and Niagara Falls by Samuel Hopkins Adams (Random 1957) is a World Landmark Book which shows Canadian-American relations at a bitter time. In his two-volume popular account of the War of 1812, called *Poltroons and Patriots* (Bobbs 1954), Glenn Tucker calls General Brock the most competent British general on the Canadian front during the war. Had he not been killed in October 1812, the war might have taken a different turn. "The decline of the British cause in the West began with his passing."

New England, although hard hit by the Embargo forbidding trade with Britain, did not want the war, and at one time even threatened to secede. *As the Wheel Turns* by Anne Tufts (Holt 1952) is laid in New Hampshire from 1813-1822. The first few chapters give a vivid picture of the stagnation of the mill towns, both in England and New England because of the British blockade. *At the Sign of the Golden Anchor* by Ruth Holberg (Doubleday 1947) is a picture of Annisquam, Mass., as the New Englanders endured the Embargo Acts. Ethel Parton's books (Viking) are about New England in this period. In 1812 in Essex, Connecticut, people were worried about their unprotected shipyards. *Sea Lady* by Julie Forsyth Batchelor (Harcourt 1957) is about a boy who saved his grandfather's figurehead, the Sea Lady,

when the British burned the shipyard. *His Indian Brother* by Hazel Wilson (Abingdon 1955) takes place in Maine sometime around 1812. *Justin Morgan Had a Horse* by Marguerite Henry (Rand 1954) is a picture of Vermont in the early 1800's. Although the British had had successes off the coast of Maine, the Battle of Plattsburg, won on Lake Champlain in September, 1814, made the frontier safe from invasion.

Several books are written about Maryland during this period. *Lanterns Aloft* by Mary Evans Andrews (Longmans 1955) takes place during the summer of 1813 when the British fleet threatened the eastern shore of Maryland. *Barney's Barges* by Don Aspden (Holiday 1944) is about a boy of Chesapeake Bay in the summer of 1814. *Dolly Madison* by Jeanette Covert Nolan (Messner 1959) and *Dolly Madison* by Jane Mayer describe the First Lady in the White House when the British burned Washington August 24, 1814. *The Star-Spangled Banner* by Neil H. Swanson and Anne Swanson is fiction about Fort McHenry in September 1814. *Broad Stripes and Bright Stars* by Marion Marsh Brown (Westminster 1955) is a biography of Francis Scott Key with insight into the politics of the period. *A Flag for the Fort* by Carl Carmer (Messner 1952) is easy reading about the bombardment of Fort McHenry.

The weight of the British Navy managed to blockade our ports in 1813, and many good stories have been written about the blockade runners and the sea fights. Our Navy was small, and the famous *Constitution*, "Old Ironsides," although it defeated the *Guerriere* in August 1812, had little effect on the blockade. *Action Starboard* by Victor Mays (Houghton 1956) is about a cabin boy on an American brig attempting to run the British blockade in 1813. *Clear for Action!* by Stephen W. Meader (Harcourt 1940) is about a Maine boy who in 1812 shipped before the mast on a cargo schooner bound for Cuba and was impressed in service on a

British frigate. *Capture at Sea* by Audrey Beyer (Knopf 1959) is a new book about the sea war with two Yankee boys impressed and taken aboard a British man-of-war. *Storm Canvas* by Armstrong Sperry (Winston) is on the high seas with sea battles, duels, and characters like King Christophe of the West Indies. *Famous American Ships* (S&S 1958) is adapted from "American Heritage." *Boatswain's Boy* by Robert C. Du Soe (Harper 1950) is continued in *Your Orders, Sir* (Longmans 1953) by Du Soe, with background of the British blockade and Jean Lafitte's pirating. *David Farragut: Boy Midshipman* by Laura Long (Bobbs 1950) is about the admiral who became a midshipman under Captain Porter at age 9, and fought in 1813 off the coast of Chile at the age of 12. Other books about him are *David Farragut, Sea Fighter* by Marie Mudra (Messner 1953) and *David Farragut, Sailor* by Ferdinand Reyher (Lippincott 1953). *Cape Horn Snorter* by Chas. J. Finger (Houghton 1939) is about the U. S. Frigate *Essex* in the Battle of Valparaiso, March 1813.

In the Pacific Northwest, too, there was conflict between the American fur traders under John Jacob Astor and the Canadian North-westerners. *Seek the Dark Gold* by J. E. Lundy (Winston 1951) begins in 1810 with a boy traveling with Astor's company bound for Oregon and ends with the purchase of Astoria by the Canadians in 1813. *East of Astoria* by

Merritt P. Allen (Longmans 1956) is a true-to-life story, of a party of Astorians going overland in the year 1811.

Andrew Jackson, with young Davy Crockett and young Sam Houston among his Tennessee militiamen, broke the power of the Creek Indians in March of 1814 at the Battle of Horseshoe Bend, Alabama. This was a forerunner of his victory in January 1815 at New Orleans. The present-day ballad of "The Battle of New Orleans" has been changed for the Canadian wave lengths. For the U. S. market the foe who ran "where the rabbits couldn't go . . . down the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico," is British, but in Canada, although not true to history, the foe has been changed to the "rebels" and Andrew Jackson transferred from 1814-15 to the 1860's.

As most Canadians live close to the border of the United States, they are surprised that our students know so little about this war. In 1817 the two countries agreed never to maintain a naval force on the Great Lakes or build forts along the international boundary. We can be proud that under this gentlemen's agreement, a 4,000-mile boundary line has been unfortified for over one hundred years. Perhaps more American boys and girls should read "Great Stories of Canada," a series for ages 12-15 published by St. Martin's Press, Toronto, Canada, (also at 103 Park Ave., New York 17, N. Y.).

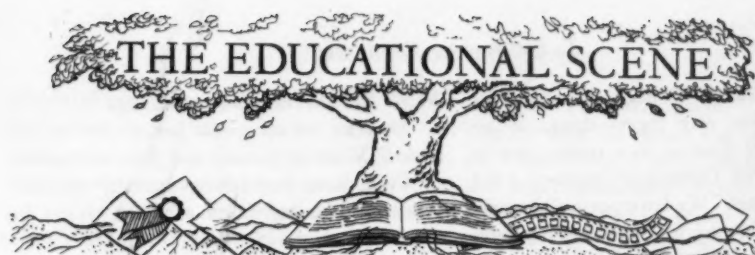
WINDOWS ON THE WORLD

(Continued from page 515)

Three women and two men have won the first "Television Writing Grants-in-Aid" of \$5,000 each, awarded by CBS from several thousand applicants.

Writer's Digest reports the winners are: Eve Merriam, writer and poet, whose proposed television writing project is a series of poetic dramas; Ellen Currie, a short story writer and advertising copy writer whose proposed project is a program series of magazine format; Helen Hanff, playwright and opera librettist,

whose project is "The Autobiography of America," a series of plays and discussions dealing with great issues of American history; Brock Brower, editor of the University of North Carolina Press, whose proposed projects include fantasy comedies and dramatic scripts for Playhouse 90; John Pfeiffer, science writer and editor whose proposed project is a series of scientific programs on the evolution of matter, life and man.



Edited by WILLIAM A. JENKINS¹

William A. Jenkins

Some Useful Materials

Outstanding Educational Books of 1958. From approximately 700 publications on education issued during 1958, forty-one books have been chosen as "outstanding" by the Education Department of the Enoch Pratt Free Library in Baltimore. The selection was made with the assistance of a panel of about 200 educational authorities. A listing of the books, reprinted from the *NEA Journal*, may be obtained for \$.05 by writing the Publications Department, Enoch Pratt Free Library, 400 Cathedral Street, Baltimore 1, Maryland. Quantity rates are available.

* * *

Growing up with Books and Growing up with Science Books. The 1959 edition of these booklets, the seventh edition, is now available. *Growing up with Books* lists and annotates 250 of the best children's books, arranged by age and subject. Old stand-bys and well-loved moderns ranging from picture books for the youngest through high adventure for the teenagers are included. Bookstores, libraries, schools, and PTA's have distributed more than two million since the booklets first appeared seven years ago. *Growing up with Science Books* will meet the current demand for science books and help all those interested in finding the best among the increasing crop. Two hundred titles are included in the booklet. Costs are \$3.35 per 100 without imprint of school or library, \$4.80 with imprint. Order from R. R. Bowker, 62 West 45th Street, New York 36.

* * *

Several publishers have prepared special lists of their science titles. Viking Junior Books

(625 Madison Avenue, New York 22) has an attractive folder, "A List of Viking Junior Science Books;" Golden Press (Educational Division, 630 Fifth Avenue, New York 20) has a 16-page brochure covering Golden Science Books; Julian Messner, Inc. (8 West 40th Street, New York 18) offers "Julian Messner Science Books for the High School Library" (junior and senior high school); G. P. Putnam's Sons (210 Madison Avenue, New York 16) also has a circular listing their science books for boys and girls and young people; Whittlesey House (McGraw-Hill Building, 330 West 42nd Street, New York 36) has a graded, annotated bibliography "Many Roads to Science" with a subject checklist which is available in limited quantities to teachers and librarians; Thomas Y. Crowell Company (432 Fourth Avenue, New York 16) has a colorful folder entitled "Science Books for Boys and Girls."

* * *

Your Child and His Reading: How Parents Can Help. Parents of children twelve and under will find Dr. Nancy Larrick's new pamphlet especially helpful. It gives basic advice on books for different ages and building a home library. Write to Public Affairs Pamphlets, 22 East 38th Street, New York 16. \$.25.

* * *

A Superintendent Looks at Books in the Schools. Dr. John N. Fischer, former superintendent of public instruction in Baltimore and

¹Dr. Jenkins is Professor of Elementary Education at the University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee.

now Dean of Teachers College, Columbia University, had some very cogent things to say about books and libraries in a recent issue of the National Book Committee *Quarterly* (Vol. 3, #2-3). He said, "We have not really taught him to read unless he reads because he wants to." Write to the National Book Committee, 24 West 40th Street, New York 18, for a free reprint.

* * *

Pictures, Pamphlets, and Packets. This booklet lists free or inexpensive teaching materials concerning aviation, air, and space. It is free if requested on school or library stationery. Write to National Aviation Education Council, 1025 Connecticut Avenue, N.W., Washington 6, D.C.

* * *

Bibliography Service. The Bull Bibliography Service is designed to provide popular, current reading lists and bibliographies for school and public libraries. The lists will be of two kinds: timely subject lists, and graded lists for different reading levels. Subscriptions cost \$2. per year. Each subscriber is entitled to five lists per year. He may choose to take five copies of one list or take one each of five different lists that will be issued from time to time. Lists of available bibliographies will be sent to subscribers to check. Subscribers are invited to suggest lists which they will find useful. Lists will cost \$.50 each. Available now is a booklist on *Space*. In preparation are *Africa and the Near East*; *Asia and the Far East*; *Easy Books too Good to Miss*; and *Best Sellers for Boys, Grades 4-6*. Bull Bibliography Service, 263 East Main Street, Smithtown, New York.

* * *

Filmstrips for Reading Readiness and Beginning Reading. A descriptive list of filmstrips for the primary grades which may be used with any of the popular reading series. Write to Encyclopedia Britannica Films, Inc., 1150 Wilmette Avenue, Wilmette, Illinois.



Some recent research findings

Shall we set up special classes for the retarded? Viola M. Cassidy and Jeanette Stanton of Ohio State found that mentally retarded children make better grades when taught in classrooms alongside other youngsters than when taught in special classes for slow learners. One hundred and ninety-four mentally retarded children enrolled in 36 Ohio public school systems were studied.

Do public school superintendents read? William Pharis of *School Executive* found that the quantity and quality of the literature read by school executives is low. Superintendents read few fiction, non-fiction, and professional books. Among books on the reading tables of the schoolmen, when this study was made, were *The Brothers Karamazov*, and *Peyton Place*; *Inside Russia* and *Masters of Deceit*. The investigator reported, "For a group which is normally cooperative on inquiry studies, the response was extremely low. . . . This unusual silence denotes negative reading habits. . . ."

Are listening skills being taught today? Arno Jewett of the U. S. Office of Education found that state and local courses of study and curriculum guides recommend the teaching of listening as part of the language arts. Twenty-five years ago this skill was not even mentioned in guides in use at that time. A total of 256 curriculum guides were used in the study.

Are young Southerners more tolerant toward Negroes? Ernest Q. Campbell of the University of North Carolina found that the younger generation in the South is no more tolerant toward Negroes than their parents. Regardless of whether the white youngsters have attended schools with Negroes, "racial rigidity" and "race conscientiousness" are heightened among the new generation of Southern whites. Subjects for inquiry included 650 adults; 2,000 junior and senior high school students.



National Library Week

The official report of the Second National

Library Week, observed April 12-18, 1959, shows that reading and libraries attracted a record amount of interest during the week and that the interest is continuing year-around with many civic activities at the community level. All 50 states participated, 46 of them through citizens' state committees, the report says. More than 5,000 communities celebrated with library open houses, book displays and exhibits, amateur reading nights, concerts, teas, author panels, and hundred of other events. These activities, says the report, "reached people of all ages with the theme 'Wake Up and Read!'" Schools, colleges, and civic groups participated. Increased awareness and support of libraries, gains in circulation and registration, and creation of a climate of greater citizen concern for the status of reading in the community and the nation were the results, the report said.

The National Book Committee, Inc., a non-profit, independent citizens' group, sponsors National Library Week, whose objective is a "better-read, better-informed America," in cooperation with the American Library Association and with the support of 30 other national organizations. Dates for the 1960 National Library Week are April 3-9.

New Enrichment Records

Four new Landmark Enrichment Records have been released this fall, bringing to 32 the number of important American historical events which come alive through the medium of these recordings. The records are based on the following Landmark books which have been published by Random House: *Alexander Hamilton and Aaron Burr* by Anna Erskine Crouse and Russell Crouse. The book dramatizes the story behind that most famous duel against the exciting background of the Revolutionary War days. *Trappers and Traders of the Far West*, by James Daugherty. The story presents those men who traveled west, some by sea and some by land, to secure beaver skins for the American Fur Company and to push our frontier westward. *Commodore Perry and the Opening of*

Japan by Ferdinand Kuhn. This book tells how the door into Japan was opened and how the mission helped shape the course of world and American history. *Teddy Roosevelt and His Rough Riders* by Henry Costar. This is a thrilling and frequently humorous account of this mission to Cuba which put the United States on the threshold of the twentieth century as a world power.

The first two and second two titles back each other on two non-breakable, 12-inch 33 1/3 rpm, long-playing, Columbia-pressed records. The retail price is \$5.95 each; the school and library price is \$5.29 each. The tested and proved Enrichment Records' formula was used in the production of the records: authentic information, professional actors, music of the period, sound effects, and interesting story dramatization. The results to our ears were excellent, welcome additions to this outstanding series. *Leads to Listening*, the valuable aid for teachers and librarians, accompanies these records as it has previous ones, and by using it classes and library groups may be given added insight into the dramatizations. Worthwhile activities preceding and following the playing of the records can make the records the nucleus of a study unit.

Enrichment Records may be secured "On Approval for Evaluation." They and additional information can be obtained by writing to Enrichment Teaching Materials, 246 Fifth Avenue, New York 1.

* * *

Last fall, Enrichment Records announced a new series of recordings called *Documentary Enrichment Records*. This fall the company added four additional documents to the series on two *Documentary Enrichment Records: The Mayflower Compact* and *George Washington's Farewell Address* back each other on one record; *The Monroe Doctrine* and *F. D. Roosevelt's Four Freedoms Speech* are coupled on the other recording. The first three are dramatizations. The last side features a transcription of

President Roosevelt's actual presentation of the speech (excerpted).

Each of the four documents is preceded by an account of the events leading to its creation and is followed by clear explanations. The documents have been edited to fit the LP side, and folk music of the period has been added for flavor of the times. Basically the approach is the same as with the *Enrichment Records* and the vital statistics of price, speed, size, and so on are identical.

As virtually the only recordings of their type available to schools and libraries, the series is praiseworthy and well worth the school price of \$5.29 per record. Information is available from Enrichment Teaching Materials, 246 Fifth Avenue, New York 1.



American Heritage Junior Library

Factual histories that children will find absorbing are what we are promised in the *American Heritage Junior Library*, beginning in February. Six books will be available each year, aimed at the bright ten year old and up. Each book will have 156 pages, including more than 150 pictures, half of them in four-color. Each book will be on a single important subject, written by an experienced author of juvenile books and with every work authenticated by an expert on the area of history covered. Illustrations will be almost entirely by means of reproductions of period pictures—painting, drawings, artifacts and maps such as appear in *American Heritage*. School, library, and bookstore distribution will be handled by Golden Press. The retail price will be \$3.50 per book. Write to American Heritage Publishing Company, Inc., 551 Fifth Avenue, New York 17, for further information.



Looking Glass Library

The first ten books in this series were released September 15. They are: *Five Children and It* by E. Nesbit; *The Blue Fairy Book* by Andrew Lang; *The Princess and the Goblin* by

George MacDonald; *Men and Gods: The Myths and Legends of Ancient Greece* by Rex Warner; *Wild Animals I Have Known* by Ernest Thompson Seton; *The Peterkin Papers* by Lucretia Hale; *A Book of Nonsense* by Edward Lear; *The Looking Glass Book of Verse* edited by Janet Adam Smith; *The Haunted Looking Glass: A Book of Ghost Stories* edited by Edward Gorey; and *The Lost World* by Arthur Conan Doyle.

Each book will have 156 pages, including more appear in *American Heritage*. School, library,

Each volume is priced at \$1.50. Consulting editors for the series are W. H. Auden, Edmund Wilson, and Phyllis McGinley. Write to Looking Glass Library, 457 Madison Avenue, New York 22.



Junior Literary Guild

Here are the selections for November 1959:

For boys and girls 5 and 6 years old:

Lost Bear by Ann Durell. Doubleday, \$2.95.

For boys and girls 7 and 8 years old:

Kidlik's Kayak by Terry Shannon. Whitman, \$2.75.

For boys and girls 9, 10, and 11 years old:

Jets and Rockets and How They Work by William P. Gottlieb. Garden City Books, \$2.95.

For girls 12 to 16 years old:

Witch's Silver by Dorothy Gilman Butters. Macrae Smith, \$2.95.

For boys 12 to 16 years old:

The Mill Creek Irregulars: Special Detectives by August Derleth. Duell, Sloan and Pearce, \$3.50.

White House Conference

The Golden Anniversary White House Conference on Children and Youth will be held in Washington March 27-April 2, 1960. NCTE is supporting the conference financially and professionally and will be represented among the seven thousand delegates, through the Council of National Organizations on Children and Youth.



Mabel F. Altstetter

BOOKS for Children

Edited by MABEL F. ALTSTETTER

Mabel F. Altstetter, Professor of English, Emeritus, Miami University (Ohio), lecturer and writer in the field of CHILDREN'S BOOKS AND READING; Editor, Adventuring with Books, 1956.

MARGARET MARY CLARK reviews books of science, social studies, and biography. Miss Clark is head of the Lewis Carroll Room, Cleveland Public Library, and a member of the committee for ADVENTURING WITH BOOKS (National Council of Teachers of English, 1956).

Folk Tales

How the Manx Cat Lost its Tail and Other Manx Folk Stories. Collected and Retold by Blanche Cowley Young. Illustrated by Nora Unwin. McKay, 1959. \$2.75. (7-12)

From the smallest island nation in the world, the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea, comes a collection of folk tales that has a freshness and directness that make them superb for telling or reading aloud. The names are somewhat difficult, for the Manx language is quite dif-

Theo Dimson. Walck, 1959. \$3.00. (7-11)
Twenty countries of the world are represented in this collection of folklore. Most of



ferent from English. A glossary and aid to pronunciation are at the end of the book. Miss Unwin's illustrations catch the vigor of the stories.

A

The Sunken City and Other Tales from Around the World. By James McNeill. Illustrated by

the tales are not found in other collections. In judging the familiar ones it is well to remember that while the stories are old there are always new children. The style is forthright as it should be in the telling of a tale. "The Haunted Forest" from Lithuania is especially charming.

A

Canute Whistlewinks. By Zacharias Topelius. Illustrated by Frank McIntosh. Longmans, 1959. \$4.00. (All ages)
It is good to have



Margaret Mary Clark

this valuable collection of Swedish-Finnish tales in a reissue edited by Frances Jenkins Olcott. It first appeared in America in 1927. The delicate imagination and perfection of style make this one of the best collections of folk tales. Topelius was a master of language; he wrote plays, novels, poems, and books of travel. Add to this skill a deep understanding of children and you have the best possible background for the telling of tales of trolls, fairies, giants, and wizards. The mystery and simplicity of the Far North are in every story. It is a book to own and to cherish. A

Picture Books

Madeline and the Gypsies. Story and Pictures by Ludwig Bemelmans. Viking, 1959. \$3.50. (4-7)

When Madeline appears again it is an event of no mean proportions. In this, the fourth Madeline book, the small girl and Pepito are left behind at a circus and the gypsies care for them and train them to take part in the circus. They were given freedom in the matter of bathing and bedtime, and at first they loved it. The adventure ends as it properly should with the return to Miss Clavel and the eleven other little girls in their school in Paris. The travels



of the circus give Bemelmans an opportunity to picture various parts of France. A

Otto in Texas. Story and Pictures by William Pene DuBois. Viking, 1959. \$2.50. (6-10).

The Biggest Dog in the World is back again to please and delight. It seems quite fitting that he and his master, Duke, should visit the biggest state where Otto's giant size fits neatly into the vast space. The intelligent Otto has many adventures, including the foiling of three bad men disguised as grandmothers who were tapping their host's oil wells underground. A tale worthy of a big dog. A

The Five Rollatinis. Story and Pictures by Jan B. Balet. Lippincott, 1959. \$3.50. (3-7)



The five Rollatinis had a bareback act in a circus with their horse, Ammonia. There was a small son, Bambino, but there was no room for him on the horse. Pappa tried to find a place for his son in other parts of the circus. He tried the lion act, the tigers, the elephants, the clowns, the bears, and the acrobats, but nothing suited. A solution is found to include Bambino in the family act, much to his satisfaction and the reader's. The pictures are lively and colorful. A

Easy Books and Picture Books

Peter Piper's Alphabet. Written and illustrated by Marcia Brown. Scribner, 1959. \$2.95. (6-12)

Marcia Brown has taken a famous old book of rhymes published in England in 1813 and has made gay, rollicking verses and colorful

pictures to illustrate them for today's children.

A

Brown Cow Farm. Written and illustrated by Davlov Ipcar. Doubleday, 1959. \$2.50. (Up to 6)

This book tops the author's *Wonderful Egg*. This is a counting book and each page has pictures to illustrate a number. When spring comes and baby animals and fowls are born, the increase in number concepts is made by mothers and babies. A beautiful book and one to cherish.

A

The Little Brown Horse. By Margaret Otto. Illustrated by Barbara Cooney. Knopf, 1959. \$50. (4-6)

Beautiful pictures and a simple story of Brown Horse and his friends, a cat and a chicken. Warmth and security in the feeling for home and friendship pervade the book.

A

Julius. Story and pictures by Syd Hoff. Harper, 1959. \$1.95. (4-7)

A worthy addition to the growing list of *I Can Read* books. Adults and children alike welcome this series for the richness of imagination and experience and good writing to be found in the books. The story of Julius, the Greatest Gorilla in the World, is original and delightful.

A

The Christmas Mouse. By Elizabeth Wenning. Drawings by Barbara Remington. Holt, 1959. \$2.95. (4-8)

This is the story of the writing of "Silent Night" as seen through the eyes of Kasper, the churchmouse. The device is certainly not original, but the author avoids sentimentality and coyness. Both illustrations and story catch the serenity and quiet faith of the Bavarian village in 1818 when the wornout organ had to be replaced by a guitar.

A

Happy Birthday to You. Rhymes and pictures by Dr. Seuss. Random, 1959. \$2.95. (All ages)

This is Theodore Geisel's first book in full color. He has really outdone himself in exciting

and riotous imagination as he shows what can happen on a birthday in the fabulous village of Katroo, where a natal day is the most important holiday of all the days that are celebrated. The reader is almost exhausted by the end of the day just following the celebration page.

A

Nine Days to Christmas. By Marie Hall Ets and Aurora Labastida. Illustrated by Marie Hall Ets. Viking, 1959. \$3.25. (4-7)

Miss Labastida is a children's librarian in Mexico City, thus assuring authenticity to the story of five-year-old Ceci and her first Christmas *posada*, or party with its *pinata*. Ceci's pinata is a wonderful one made of clay in a star shape with gay decorations and filled with fruit and candy, and she cannot bear the thought of having it broken by blindfolded children who scramble for the sweets. Yet when it was broken a magical and wonderful thing happened.

The pictures are especially appealing and give a sense of participation in the happy time.

A

The Smallest Elephant in the World. By Alvin Tresselt. Illustrated by Milton Glaser. Knopf, 1959. \$2.95. (4-7)

Children will love the story of an elephant no larger than a mouse whose search for a home where he will not be laughed at ends in a circus where he finds a friend and fellow performer in a midget. The idea is clear that size does not determine worth.

A

And Almedeo Asked, How Does One Become a Man? By George Mendoza. Illustrated by Ati Forberg. Brazier, 1959. \$2.50. (8-12)

Almedeo asked many people how to become a man, and all had different answers. He had to learn for himself not to trust the glib tongue and the easy answer. He learned, too, not to despise weakness but to pity it. The acceptance of responsibility for himself alone brought with it the inner peace and self-confidence that mark a real man.

The style is grave, but there is charm in the writing, and while the wisdom is obvious it is not shouted. Miss Forberg's exquisite drawings are completely a part of the strength and grace of the book. Paper, print, and binding make a distinguished book. A

Miscellaneous

The Boys' Cook Book. By Helen Evans Brown and Philip S. Brown. Illustrated by Harry O. Diamond. Doubleday, 1959. \$2.95. (Up to 16)

Everything a budding cook needs to know is told in this book simply and often humorously. A glossary of cooking terms is included.

The book seems dedicated to the worthy cause of getting away from the hot dog-hamburger-canned beans-coke routine. There are sixteen beverages, innumerable meat dishes, salads, breads, and desserts galore. A valuable book. A

Recommended Children's Books for 1958-59.

Compiled by E. Louise Davis. Junior Libraries, 1959. \$2.00.

Junior Libraries publishes annually a compilation of reviews which have appeared in that publication and the children section of the *Library Journal*. There are 1058 reviews arranged for four age groups, For the Youngest, The Beginning Reader, Upper Elementary Grades, and Teen Age. There is an author-title index which makes the book very useable.

This publication has an advantage over the usual bibliography of children's books because instead of annotations, it has full length reviews pointing out the weaknesses and strengths of the books listed. A

On Your Toes. By Thalia Mara. Illustrated by Louise Holmgren. Doubleday, 1959. \$2.50. (10 up).

This book is the most sensible and enlightening one on the ballet that this reviewer has ever seen. The author, a professional dancer herself, makes clear by simple words and illus-

trations the various aspects of *pointes*, or toe dancing. She stresses what not to do and emphasizes the penalties in deformed toes, painful bunions and nagging blisters that can come from the wrong training at too early an age. This is a valuable book for mothers and teachers as well as children. A

Social Studies

Let's Visit Korea. By John C. Caldwell and Elsie F. Caldwell. Illustrated with maps and photographs. John Day, 1959. \$2.95 (9-13)

Both of these books are particularly valuable for the background of modern industrial, social, and political development within Japan and Korea, though their coverage is comprehensive and includes the history and geography as well. Industrial and economic problems of these two heavily populated nations are provocatively described, and it is made clear that they can not easily be solved. Customs, festivals, family life, and education are all presented, and sections in each book describing the complexities of learning more than one alphabet in each country are of absorbing interest. Many clear



photographs add value to both of these titles. C

Let's Visit Japan. By John C. Caldwell. Illustrated with maps and photographs. John Day, 1959. \$2.95 (9-13)



The Eskimo: Arctic Hunters and Trappers. By Sonia Bleeker. Illustrated by Patricia Boodell. Morrow, 1959. \$2.50 (9-12)

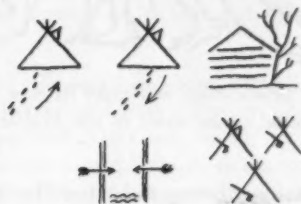


Beginning with the origins of the Eskimos and concluding with a brief history of explorations in Eskimo inhabited lands, this is an outstanding contribution to the study of the Eskimo. The book is basically concerned with his day-to-day living; the home-building, hunting on the ice and inland, preparing of food and clothing, and the customs, beliefs and recreation. The material is splendid in its detail, and gives refreshing insight into the lives of a

people who are becoming increasingly important as the story of Arctic exploration continues to unfold. C

Indian Picture Writing. Written and illustrated by Robert Hofsinde. Morrow, 1959. \$2.50 (9-14)

"The American Indians used picture writing to depict their legends and dreams, personal triumphs in the hunt and on the battlefield, and



family and tribal history." From this picture writing 248 symbols have been assembled by the author-artist in large clear drawings, with the explanation or interpretation of each picture. Several letters in picture writing are appended, which suggest excellent possibilities for classroom projects during the Indian unit studies, using combinations of the symbols to produce original letters. A useful alphabetical index of the symbols serves as a quick reference, as the symbols are loosely grouped under many headings. C

Miracle Plays: Seven Medieval Plays for Modern Players. Adapted by Anne Malcolmson. Illustrated by Pauline Baynes. Houghton, 1959. \$3.00. (11-14)

A perfectly delightful group of medieval miracle plays has been rewritten by the author from early sources for performance by younger children. She has retained the spirit of these old plays produced by the Guilds, and there is both reverence and humor in the biblical and saintly tales of Noah, Abraham and Isaac, the Nativity, and Saint Nicholas. A ten-page introduction offers a rich historical background of the miracle plays and how they were given in medieval times. Attractively illustrated, and containing a brief "dictionary" of unfamiliar



words, *Miracle Plays* will make its own special contribution to the study of the Middle Ages.

C

Billy Yank and Johnny Reb: How They Fought and Made Up. By Earl Schenck Miers. Illustrated by L. Vosburgh. Rand, 1959. \$3.50. (12-up)



"Here are the battles and people of the Civil War presented from the point of view of the common soldiers who fought the battles and the common people who lived through the war." And Earl Schenck Miers writes a vivid objective narrative of both sides ranging from leaders and battle strategies to first hand accounts of individuals affected by the war. During the past few years there has been an increasing number of factual and fictional books on the Civil War. This recent title, with its sympathetic attitude toward the problems of both the North and the South, will prove a valuable addition.

C

Changing the Face of North America: The Challenge of the St. Lawrence Seaway. By Patricia Lauber. Illustrated with photographs, maps and diagrams. Coward, 1959. \$2.50 (10-14) (Challenge Books).

Island in the Desert: The Challenge of the Nile. By Charles R. Joy. Illustrated with photographs and maps. Coward, 1959. \$2.50 (10-15) (Challenge Books).

It was LaSalle who first dreamed of "ships sailing the Great Lakes, ships gathering the riches of the land and carrying them eastward ..." From his first ill-fated attempt to the recently opened seaway the author tells an absorbing story of the men and machines that have furthered this tremendous project, and offers an impressive array of clarifying maps, statistics, diagrams, and photographs. The united efforts of Canada and the United States to carry out the inland waterway project, and its implications for the future are effectively presented. This is excellent introductory material on "one of the biggest changes man has ever made in any land."

The story of another great seaway is that of the Nile and its significance for the future of Egypt. To emphasize the importance of the Nile through the ages, life in a village of 1390 BC is contrasted with that of a modern community in which the people are aided through such advances as dams and electric power. The revolution in 1952 which redistributed land among the people and the promise of education for all offers a new future for the Egyptians who have "learned to control the river and create for themselves a better Egypt given them by the Nile." A timely book which effectively contrasts the old and the new in an ancient land, and is illustrated with many good maps and photographs.

C

Washington and the Revolution. By Lynn Montross. Illustrated by Victor Mays. Houghton Mifflin, 1959. \$1.95 (11-up)

An outstandingly written narrative of the American Revolution covers the period from

Washington's appointment as Commander-in-chief until the discharge of the troops. The book is really a remarkable account of the period in which "Americans had flown to arms before they had a central government of their own," and Washington and his army paid a high price because of the lack of food, clothing and necessary arms. The major battles are described and the author's rich background provides many interesting sidelights not usually found in an account for younger readers. There are many maps of battles and campaigns as well as action-filled two-tone illustrations. An invaluable supplement to the study of the War for Independence.

C

Harimau. By Rudolf Voorhoeve. Translated from the Dutch by Jan Fabricius. Day, 1959. \$2.95 (13-up)



A sustained and tremendously moving story of a Sumatran tiger who finally becomes a man-eater, and is relentlessly hunted and destroyed. The pattern of Harimau's own life in his fight for survival is vividly reconstructed: the destruction of his first mate and three cubs by hunters, and the later capture of his second family. It was Harimau's attempt to rescue them

that led to his downfall, for his acquired animal wisdom was inadequate against the shrewdness of his human enemy in serious pursuit. The atmosphere of the jungle, the superstition and fear of the villagers toward Harimau, and tigers in general, are all a part of this account written by the hunter who finally tracked down Harimau, who was not "just any tiger, but an outstanding tiger of character," who had become a serious menace to humans and had to be destroyed.

C

I Want To Be Series. By Carla Greene. Illustrated in color and black-and-white. Children's Press, 1958. \$2.00 each. (6-8)

This easy to read series of career books offers slight but useful information at the primary child's reading level for first and second grades. Current titles include: *I Want To Be a Policeman, . . . a Postman, . . . a Doctor, . . . a Storekeeper, . . . a Telephone Operator, . . . a Truck-Driver, . . . a Road-BUILDER, . . . a News Reporter.* Each story follows the pattern of children's interest in a special vocation and what they can discover first hand about it. Format of the books is most attractive with large print and many illustrations. Useful introductory material for community helper units.

C

The Arabs. By Harry B. Ellis. Illustrated by Leonard Everett Fisher. World, 1958, \$2.95. (11 and up)

Here is not only a picture of how the Arabs live in the desert and in the city, but a history of the Arabian people, and the impact of their culture, religion, and economy on many other countries. Modern Arabia, with its social and political problems, and trend toward unity is very well presented for younger readers in a book attractive in format and containing excellent maps and illustrations.

C

America Begins. By Alice Dalgliesh. Illustrated by Lois Maloy. Scribner, 1938, 1958. \$3.00. (8-10)

A color-illustrated history of American ex-

ploration between the early eleventh and seventeenth centuries "which gives an introduction to a group of men all of whom had great courage and endurance" from the Norsemen to Captain John Smith. This simple and attractive presentation for younger readers has proved



most useful in past years, and brief additions on western and southwestern explorations will add to its value.

C

The Arctic

The Arctic World. By John Euller. Illustrated with photographs and maps. Abelard Schuman. 1958. \$3.00. (11-and up)



Books on the Arctic keep pace with the increasing interest in the polar regions. *The Arctic World* highlights the geographic features, modern exploration, and the future potentialities of this region. The descriptions of the caribou, of seal hunting, and of the Eskimos will be of special interest to younger readers for the

detailed information that they offer. Fine clear maps and many photographs add pictorial interest. The print, though clear and well spaced, is small, and this may discourage some readers.

C

Let's Go to a Hospital. By Diana Hammond. Illustrated by Marvin Zetlan. Putnam, 1959. \$1.95. (8-10)

Let's Go to a Hospital tells you, the young patient, just what you might experience when you go for a tonsillectomy from the moment you enter the hospital lobby until departure.



In addition, it gives a very comprehensive introduction to the general functioning of a hospital from laundry to laboratory. Useful, color-illustrated and attractive material for community units, or to prepare young patients for a hospital visit.

C

New filmstrips

Adventures in Communicating is a new set of four filmstrips in color on sentence structure and use, produced by Filmstrip House, 347 Madison Avenue, New York 17, for elementary and junior high school use.

"How We Communicate," "What Is a 'Sentence Variety,'" and "Sentence Do's and Don'ts," are the individual titles. The set is a sequel to *Adventures in Words*, and the two sets are offered in combination at \$30; in sets at \$20; and individual titles, at \$6.

The new series shows how all five senses are used in communicating and then teaches

ten principles essential to proper use of sentences in written communication. Color is used functionally to familiarize the student with parts of speech and their use in different sentence patterns. Emphasis is placed on avoiding comma splices, fragments, and faulty reference. C

Biography

America's First Trained Nurse: Linda Richards.
By Rachel Baker. Messner, 1959. \$2.95 (11-15)

Cornelia: The Story of a Civil War Nurse. By Jane T. McConnell. Illustrated by Dorothy Bayley Morse. Crowell, 1959. \$3.00 (11-15)

There are never enough books about nurses to meet the demands of enthusiastic readers. Two recent biographies of American pioneer nurses will be most welcome additions, not only for the subject interest but for valuable historic background as well.

Cornelia was a young New Jersey Quaker girl, concerned by the tales of Civil War wounded who returned home with stories of the misery of the war, where men died from lack of food, shelter, and medical care rather than war incurred injuries. Cornelia Hancock served on many battlefields and "played an active role at Gettysburg, the Battle of the Wilderness, White House Landing, Sheridan's raids and the capture of Richmond," and her experiences give insight into the rigors endured by the soldiers. In the post-war years, Cornelia founded a school for the freed Negro children in Mount Pleasant, South Carolina, and devoted her later life to social service in Philadelphia, but it is her story of the war years that make this book most memorable.

America's First Trained Nurse covers an almost parallel period, the development of the nursing profession in America, and is a tremendously moving story of a young Vermont farm girl who from childhood wanted to care for the sick. Her hospital training began when

it was a despised and menial occupation, but she helped to develop it into an honorable profession. Her visit to England and contact with Florence Nightingale proved of inestimable value in advancing the work of nurses in America. As a warm and personal account of a dedicated woman, the story of Linda Richards should be both popular and inspiring. C

Frederick Douglass: Slave-Fighter-Freeman. By Arna Bontemps. Illustrated by Harper Johnson. Knopf, 1959. \$3.00 (9-12)

Wearing clothes presented to him by his youthful master, small Fred Bailey left the plantation for the wonderful city of Baltimore and new service with one of his master's kinfolk. Sharing the lessons with Tommy Auld, Fred learned the ABC's, and this meager foundation was a stepping stone to his own self-education and a burning ambition to help free his people from slavery. To elude agents searching for runaways he changed his name from Bailey to Douglass, and under the new name, wrote and lectured in the cause of his people. Arna Bontemps has written this story for a younger age group, and achieves a rare simplicity and tenderness in the telling. Illustrated with many attractive black-and-white-drawings. C

Legends of the Saints. By E. Lucia Turnbull. Illustrated by Lili Réthi. Lippincott, 1959. \$2.95. (9-12)

A full dozen legends of the saints written "for boys and girls of all faiths" tell of Saint Jerome and the lion, Francis and the wolf of Gubbio, Margaret of Scotland, the bride from the sea, Bartholomew and the duck, Roque and his dog, and other saints who lived between the fourth and fourteenth centuries. The legends are told with unusual charm and dramatic appeal, and a brief appendix relates such facts as are known about each saint represented in the ancient legends. The book is excellent for reading aloud and is generously illustrated with many pen and ink drawings. C

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THE ROLE OF EXPERIENCE CHARTS

(Continued from page 483)

1. Adams, Fay, Gray, Lillian; Reese, Dora. *Teaching Children to Read*. New York: Ronald Press Co., 1949. (pp. 165-166)
2. Betts, E. A. *Foundations of Reading Instruction*. New York: American Book Co., 1957. (pp. 388-433.)
3. Bond, Guy, Eva Wagner, *Teaching the Child to Read*. New York: Macmillan Co., 1950. (pp. 92-96.)
4. Burton, William; Clara Baker, and Kemp, Grade. *Reading in Child Development*. New York: Bobbs-Merrill Co., Inc., 1956. (pp. 218-228.)
5. Dolch, Edward. *Teaching Primary Reading*. Champaign: Garrard Press, 1950. (pp. 149-177.)
6. Harris, Albert J. *How to Increase Reading Ability*. New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1956. (pp. 77-81.)
7. Lamoreau, Lillian, and Lee, Dorris. *Learning to Read Through Experience*. New York: D-Appleton Century Co., Inc. 1943.
8. McKee, Paul. *The Teaching of Reading*. New York: Houghton-Mifflin Co., 1948. (pp. 221-224.)
9. Russell, David. *Children Learn to Read*. New York: Ginn and Co., 1949. (pp. 136-138.)
10. Stone, Clarence R. *Progress in Primary Reading*. St. Louis: Webster Publishing Co., 1950. (pp. 195-203.)
11. Tinker, Miles A. *Teaching Elementary Reading*. New York: D. Appleton-Century Co., 1952. (pp. 107-110.)
12. Yoakum, Gerald A. *Basal Reading Instruction*. New York: McGraw Hill Book Co., Inc. 1955. (pp. 78-79.)

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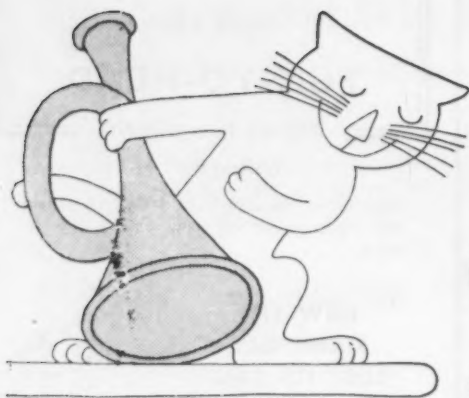
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